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CHURCH OF ST. VASILI, MOSCOW.

THE
History of Russia.



GREAT BELL, MOSCOW.

BY JONATHAN DUNCAN, B.A.



LONDON: MILFORD HOUSE.

HISTORY OF RUSSIA

FROM THE

FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE BY ROURICK

TO THE

CLOSE OF THE HUNGARIAN WAR.

BY

ALPHONSE RABBE AND JONATHAN DUNCAN, B.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

RABBE'S *History of Russia* was originally published in the French Historical Library, edited by Felix Bodin, and was justly considered a model of judicious condensation. With the exception of the first chapter on the "Origin of the Russians," contributed by myself, the whole of this volume I have translated from Rabbe. The first chapter of the second volume is also translated from his work; for the remainder I am responsible.

The history of Russia is less known than that of any other country in Europe; and many believe that Peter the Great was the first of the Czars who infused civilisation into Muscovite barbarism. That prevalent error the following pages will remove. As to Peter the Great himself, a very false notion is generally entertained, owing to the fulsome panegyric of Voltaire, written at the request of the Empress Catherine II., by whom the philosopher of Ferney was largely pensioned. Rabbe has painted his character in other colours, not mixed on a golden pallet. Some readers, too sensitive at the exposure of vice, may be shocked at the narrative of the reign of Catherine II., who invaded and partitioned

Poland to reward the assassins of her husband and satiate the cupidity of her numerous lovers; but the suppression of fact is an outrage on truth; and history is not written to please the fastidious, but to instruct posterity. There may be a criticism that condemns Tacitus—what is its value?

The reigns of these two sovereigns are narrated at greater length than those of their predecessors, because they chiefly brought Russia within the sphere of European diplomacy and of international law. The earlier periods are treated with more conciseness, as they present little more than a continued scene of rapine and murder. However, sufficient light is thrown on the subjugation of the Russians by the Tatars, on the ferocity of Ivan the Terrible, and on the celebrated imposture of the false Demetrius. Where one historic epoch ceases and another begins, an account is given of the HABITS and MANNERS of the people, by which their slow advances in social life may be easily traced through all the transition periods of their history.

The work of Rabbe terminates with the downfall of Napoleon; but though he has described the French invasion of Russia and its disastrous failure, he has not sketched the reign of Alexander, which omission I have supplied. In the interregnum, or period which elapsed from the death of Alexander to the coronation of Nicholas, all the circumstances relating to the famous conspiracy of Colonel Pestel and his associates are narrated; and the reign of the present Emperor is brought down to the close of the Hungarian war.

The political institutions of Russia, in common with those

of other countries, have not been struck out at a heat, but have been gradually moulded into their present form. Their rise, and the changes they have undergone, have been incidentally noticed at their proper epochs; but it appeared to me desirable that a separate section should be devoted to each, so as to secure fulness and unbroken continuity in narration. In accordance with this plan I have treated the subjects of Serfdom and Landed Tenure; the Church; the Nobility; Trade; the Laws; the Caucasus and the Trans-Caucasian Provinces of Russia.

Whatever may be the merits or demerits of this work, it may be presumed that it is opportunely published. The war has called into existence many books on Russia, but none embracing its whole history. They who desire to study the policy of that country require something more than a vague reference to the WILL of Peter the Great, or a passing allusion to the conquest of the Crimea by Catherine II. These volumes are designed to communicate such knowledge, and, to a certain extent, supply a deficiency in our historical literature.

JONATHAN DUNCAN.

July 1854.

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THE HISTORY OF RUSSIA.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE RUSSIANS.

THE ancient inhabitants of Russia, so far as they can be traced, were descended from two different peoples, the Slavonians and the Finnish. The former settled in the neighbourhood of the Volga and the Dwina ; the latter in the vicinity of the Dneiper and the higher banks of the Don. Lithuania and Poland were the principal homes of the Slavonians, only a single branch of them spreading to the Dneiper. The Slavonians of the Danube, having been driven back by the Bulgarians, returned to the north, and located themselves beyond the Dneiper, on which they built Kief. A Slavonian colony advanced to the Volga and founded Novogorod. A century passed away, of which history has preserved no record. These Slavonians at length reappear, surrounded by Finnish peoples. At that epoch the Russian empire was founded by the Varangians, supposed to be Normans or Scandinavians, of whom Storch gives the following account :

“ The Normans, named Varangians by the Russians, were not a single race. The name was given collectively to the tribes who dwelt on the shores of the Baltic, to the Danes, to the Swedes, and the Norwegians, all of whom were pirates. Appa-

rently they derived their origin from the Goths. By valour and good fortune they overturned a large portion of Europe. The first traces of their maritime expeditions are observable in the year 516, and perhaps they commenced at an earlier date. This people may possibly be included in the denomination of Franks, mentioned by history in the time of the Emperor Probus as a piratical nation; in 795 they appeared for the first time in Ireland. In 813 they began their incursions on the Elbe, penetrating into Friesland and Flanders; afterwards they entered Aquitaine, sailed up the Seine, and ravaged France. In 857 they seized on Luna, and subsequently on Pisa in Italy. In 862 Rurik founded Russia; and, at the same date, a Norman of the same name made himself famous in the history of Holland. Shortly afterwards, Oskold and Dir founded Kief. In the tenth century Regnvold ruled at Polotsk; and from his daughter, according to the Russian annalists, the Grand Dukes of Lithuania descended. About the year 1000 the Varangian Normans took Apulia from the Greeks and Sicily from the Arabs. They gave their name to Normandy after Rollo had taken that country from the king of France. The conquest of England also forms a part of their history.”*

Levesque, differing from all other historians, ascribes the origin of the Russians to the Huns. “As the modern Russians,” observes this judicious writer, “derive their descent chiefly from Slavonian ancestors, some of their annalists have desired to give the same origin to the Varangian Russians, their ancient sovereigns. They have gathered together all probabilities and plausibilities to support a system inspired by national vanity. The Orientals, who acknowledge Saklab as the father of the Slavonians, do not bestow on the Russians the same genealogy, but make them descend from Rouss. Constantine Porphyrogenetes speaks of the Slavonians and Russians as two peoples of different

* *Tableau de la Russie, par Henri Storch, tom. ii. in notes, ch. 4.*

race and language ; he has also preserved in both languages the names of the shoals and cataracts of the Borysthenes. The Germans also distinguish between the Slavonians and the Russians, but insist on the Gothic origin of the latter. They conceal the fact that oriental tradition is a powerful argument against their opinion ; for, according to that tradition, the Russians from time immemorial have been a peculiar people, having nothing in common with the Gothic nations. The Germans imagine that they have found, in certain Russian names, traces of Gothic descent. For example, they pretend that Rurik is the same as Roderick ; and, in fact, the termination *ric*, which signifies rich or powerful, belongs to the Gothic language ; and it is probable that the Varangian Russians living in the neighbourhood of the Goths, and perhaps mingling with them, may have adopted some of their names. It is also possible that Gothic families, incorporated among the Russians, may have raised themselves to the highest rank by their courage, and have obtained sovereign power over some tribe. Goths may have ruled over Varangian Russians, as the latter at a subsequent date dominated over the Slavonians of Novogorod. Thus the Russians may be of the same race as the Huns, although Rurik and his brothers were of Gothic origin.”*

The immense territory of Russia, though now united under one sovereign, contains very many races distinct in habits, manners, and language, marking the characteristics of the various peoples at the settlement of the primitive governments, of which the Russo-Novogorodians may be accounted the earliest for the following reasons : 1. Kief was subjected to Novogorod shortly after its foundation. 2. While Russia was divided, the larger portion of it then being subjugated by the Mongols, to whom tribute was paid, Kief fell under the foreign yoke, while Novogorod retained its independence under an uninterrupted line of princes. 3. When Kief was reannexed to the empire, it was

* Histoire de Russie, par M. Levesque, tom. i. pp. 80-82.

obliged to recognise the supremacy of the Grand Duke. 4. The inhabitants of Great Russia, in which is Novogorod, are much the most numerous, and their dialect is the prevailing language.

The Cossacks have been divided into two great families: 1. The Cossacks of the Ukraine; 2. the Cossacks of the Don. From both of these stocks different tribes sprang, each having a military constitution. Those named Slobodes in the government of Kharkof and the Zaporoghians belong to the Ukraine, otherwise called Little Russia. Affiliated with the Cossacks of the Don are those of the Volga, of Grebenski, of Orenbourg, of the Oural, and of Siberia. The word 'Cossack' is Tartar, and signifies "an armed man."

In the year 1320, Gedimir, Prince of Lithuania, defeating the Grand Duke Stanislaus, seized Kief, placed a governor over it, and exercised all the rights of a conqueror over the subjected territory. This seems to be the date of the first appearance of the Cossacks of Little Russia on the rolls of history. They were refugees from the cruelty of Gedimir, seeking a new home at the mouth of the Dneiper. There exposed to constant incursions from the Poles, the Lithuanians, and the Tartars, they sought to fortify themselves by a military constitution. Kief was ravaged by the Tartars in 1415; and at length the whole principality, with Lithuania, was incorporated with the kingdom of Poland. Other Russians then sought shelter with the Cossacks, and by degrees the colony extended to the Bug and the Dneister, and established itself over the whole territory that lies between those rivers and the Dneiper. The Cossacks built towns and villages, in which they dwelt during the winter with their families, from which they sallied forth in summer, and carried on a predatory warfare against the Turks and Tartars. As they formed a bulwark to Poland against its enemies, the Poles, far from discouraging, favoured this warlike republic. In 1540, King Sigismund ceded to the Cossacks, in perpetuity, the country above the cataracts of the Dneiper, as a reward for their services. Stephen

Bathory completed their military organisation by giving them a commander, who took the title of *Hetman* or *Ataman*, and also extended their territory. His successors did not follow this prudent policy. They prohibited Cossack invasions of Turkey, and compelled those warriors attached to the Greek Church to acknowledge the supremacy of the pope. Other oppressions followed ; at length the Cossacks threw off the yoke, and in 1654, under their Hetman, Bogdan Khmelnitzki, submitted to the czars of Russia. All the towns and tribes on the eastern bank of the Dneiper, as well as Kief, imitated their example. Thus, after a separation of 334 years, Little Russia was reunited to Great Russia.

During the wars between the Cossacks and the Poles, great numbers of the former crossed the eastern banks of the Dneiper and fled to the opposite bank, seeking refuge in the southern provinces of the Russian Empire. There they preserved their military organisation, and established themselves on a fertile though uninhabited land. This was the origin of the Slobodian Cossacks. The country had formerly belonged to the Grand Duchy of Kief, but had been desolated and depopulated at the Tartar invasion. There they built towns and villages.

Among the Cossacks of Little Russia the Zaporoghians held the second rank, though their colony was much more ancient than that of the Slobodians. The better to defend the Cossacks of the Ukraine from the invasion of the Tartars, bodies of young unmarried men were stationed on the southern frontiers, at the point where the Dneiper empties itself into the Black Sea. This district became the favourite resort of warlike youth, and was regarded as a military school. Vowed to celibacy, they excluded all women from their cantonments. Their numbers constantly increased by the accession of fugitives from Polish oppression, and they extended their territory to the shores of the Bug. It was about the commencement of the seventh century that they separated themselves entirely from the Cossacks of Little Russia,

whose hetman, up to that date, they had recognised as their chief. They constituted themselves an independent military *state*, and elected a leader, whom they named *Kochervi-Ataman*. In the Tartar language *koch* signifies a “camp.” Their principal residence was called *Setcha*, denoting an intrenched and fortified camp, from the Russian verb *otsetch*, to cut or separate; and though they moved from place to place, they were never far distant from the cataracts of the Dneiper, and hence were called Zaporoghians, *za* signifying “behind” or “beyond,” and *porog* a “cataract.”

The laws and usages of these people were peculiar. They were associated for warlike purposes, neglected agriculture and the rearing of cattle, and fished and hunted merely for pastime. Celibacy was a fundamental law; but they carried off the wives of their neighbours, though they never allowed them to approach the setcha. To prevent any diminution of their numbers, they adopted and brought up children wherever they found them; they sheltered criminals and runaway serfs, and there were few nations of Europe that did not contribute some members to their community. Their constitution was absolutely democratic. There was perfect equality among them. The hetman was elected annually. At the expiration of his year of office he again became a simple Cossack, renouncing the rank and honours with which he had been temporarily invested. Usage was their law, for they had no written code. Criminals were impartially judged, but punishments were severe. A Cossack who murdered one of his comrades was interred alive with the corpse of his victim; a thief was exposed three days in a pillory, afterwards beaten, often to death. The majority followed the Greek Church, but there was no restraint on religious opinions. They displayed all the virtues and vices common in a free people living by war and plunder. They were brave and barbarous, hospitable and avaricious, idle and debauched. They could sometimes bring 40,000 fighting men into the field. Peter the Great destroyed their setcha, when they took part in the insurrection of Mazeppa, Hetman of the

Cossacks of the Ukraine. They then united themselves under the protection of the Khan of the Crimea, and in 1737 were admitted among the vassals of Russia, and served as a bulwark against the Tartars. At that date a particular chancery was appointed for managing their affairs, but it had little influence over their internal regulations. Their only obligation to the empire was to appear in the field when summoned; then they were paid and had rations in common with other Cossacks. In the war against the Turks which ended in 1774, they were guilty of treason on several occasions, and even detected in a project for declaring their independence. In 1775, Catharine II., alleging that their guilt was most heinous, banished them to the district of Bielgerod. In 1787 they were pardoned and formed into regiments by Prince Potemkin, when they received the title of "Faithful Cossacks of the Black Sea," in the hope that they would prove so in future. By an ukase of the 30th June, 1792, Catharine gave up to them the peninsula of Taman, which depends on the government of Taurida, and all the territories lying between the river Kouban and the sea of Azof up to the rivers Yea and Laba, occupying about 1000 square miles. They are now called the Tchernomorskii Cossacks.

The Cossacks of the Don derive their name from that river, and antiquarians trace their origin to the Russians of Novogorod. At an early date they formed a numerous colony. Slavery, introduced into Russia by the Czar Boris Godounof shortly after their first organisation, induced hundreds of bondsmen to join their confederacy. They gave the prisoners they took in forays the choice of fraternisation. In 1570, after the campaign of the Turks against Astracan, they were sufficiently strong to establish their capital at Tcherkosk, which was only forty English miles from the fortress of Azof; when they became a real bulwark to Russia. The sovereigns of Russia did for them what the kings of Poland had done for the Cossacks of Little Russia. They favoured the increase of their numbers, and assigned them lands

exempt from tribute. In 1579, for the first time, the Don Cossacks acted with the Russians, and were paid as soldiers. This happened in the campaign against Livonia, where 3000 of them served. They were a restless race, fond of shifting their quarters, and addicted to predatory incursions. Thus they became scattered by frequent emigrations. At first they travelled to the Volga, where they used to halt during summer; at the approach of winter they returned to the Don. At length many took up their permanent quarters on the Volga, dwelling in the towns, as Saratof, Dmitrief, Tsaritoï, Tchenor-Sar, and others, and there formed a civil constitution. In 1734 the Cossacks of the Volga were declared independent of the Cossacks of the Don, and elected their own hetman.

The Grebenski Cossacks are another offshoot from those of the Don. The separation was effected at nearly the same period as that of the Cossacks of the Volga, and the Grebenski domiciliated themselves on the banks of the Terek. In one of the campaigns of the Czar Ivan the First against the Tartars of the Caucasus, a body of the Cossacks formed the advanced line of the army, and scaled a mountain which resembled a comb, on account of small sharp spurs which sloped down from its summit and projected horizontally. In the Russian language *greben* means a comb; and to commemorate the gallant exploit, the czar bestowed on them the title of Grebenski, which they have since borne as an honourable distinction.

The Cossacks of Orenbourg separated at a later date than the Cossacks of the Volga from their common stock, the Cossacks of the Don. At first they established themselves on the banks of the Samara river; but when the alignment of Orenbourg, which was under survey from 1730 to 1740, was completed, a large number were transferred thither. The cantonments were extended along the banks of the Samara, of the Oûi and the Oural, from Verkhouratsk to Ilets, and close to the small forts erected to check the incursions of the Kirgis and the Bashkirs.

The Cossacks of the Oural, anciently called the Jaik, formed one of the most numerous and powerful confederacies sprung from those of the Don. At the beginning of the fifteenth century they had established themselves on the shores of the Caspian Sea and at the mouth of the Oural. They submitted voluntarily to the Czar Michael Feorodowitch, received the same organisation as the Cossacks of the Don, obtained the right of fishery in the Oural, with the liberty of manufacturing salt from the neighbouring lakes, and brandy. These indulgences induced them to believe that government was afraid of them, and they resisted the reform of the army in 1772; but they were soon reduced to obedience. However, in the following year they joined the revolt of Pugatscheff. For this treason they were severely punished; and to obliterate as far as possible the memory of their crime, the river Jaik was changed into Oural, and the town into that of Ouralsk. The Cossacks of the Jaik thus became Cossacks of the Oural.

The last sub-division of the Cossacks of the Don is that of the Cossacks of Siberia. In the sixteenth century a considerable body of these troops advanced eastward, penetrating to the Caspian, and carrying devastation along their route. Ivan the Second then filled the throne of Russia. In 1557 he marched against them. Terrified at his approach, they fled along the banks of the Kama, entered Permia, gained the Oural mountains, and, under their hetman, Jermak Timofief, discovered Siberia. In 1581 they were pardoned, and Jermak was recompensed for adding that immense territory to the empire. He died in 1584. His successors followed up the adventurous path he had opened, till they reached China. They were stationed on the confines of that country, and intermarried with the nations, taking the name of the province Jermak had discovered.

The Serbs or Servians who inhabit Russia descend from the Slavonians of Illyria. In the fourth century the name of Illyria was given to all the Roman provinces lying in the east of Europe, between the Adriatic Sea and the Danube, up to the Euxine,

though originally it only included the eastern coasts of the Adriatic. The Serbs of Russia were established in 1754 as colonists, to whom was assigned a considerable tract of country on the Dneiper, among the lands of the Zaporoghian Cossacks. This district was called New Servia, and stretched away to the frontier of Poland, which enclosed it on three sides. The colony received a military organisation, and was designed as a counterpoise against the Cossacks. In 1764 this territory became a distinct government, and was named the government of New Russia, and subsequently formed a considerable part of the government of Catherinoslaf. There are also in the Russian empire two peoples presumed to be of Slavonian descent, although their origin is obscure. These are the Lithuanians and Lettons, the latter including the inhabitants of Courland.

The Lithuanians, the Lettons, and the ancient Prussians appear to have a common stock. In the annals of Nestor, written in the ninth century, Litva, by which name Lithuania was then called, was tributary to the Russians; but under the successors of Vladimir the Great it became independent, and in the thirteenth century, Ringold became the first Grand Duke of Lithuania. Subsequently, Gedimir expelled the Tartars from Kief, and annexed that principality to the Lithuanian duchy. Jagellon, one of his successors, though of a different race, was baptised in 1386, and married Hedviga, queen of Poland, when the two countries were incorporated, and since that epoch they have shared the same fate. In the first division of Poland, in 1773, the share of Russia was sliced off from Lithuania, out of which were formed the governments of Mohilef and Polotsk. At the second division the Grand Duchy lost 1731 square miles, which were erected into the government of Minsk, having formerly been known as Little Poland. Finally, in the third division of 1796, the remainder of Lithuania became the spoil of Russia, and formed the governments of Wilna and Slomim.

The Lettons inhabited Livonia, but spoke the same language

as the Lithuanians. In the chronicles of the middle age, the following denominations are used, showing almost the identity of the two nations, though in their political organisation they were independent of each other: thus Letthania, Lettonia, Litthovia, Littsonia, Littari, Litthvini, Litthvani, and Lettones. In the circle of Valk in Livonia the river Leite has its source; it is also called Talatte, and a Letton was also called Latvis, that is to say, a man living near the river Leite or Latte. Hence the word Lettgallia which frequently occurs in the old annals. In the same dialect *Leitis* signifies a Lithuanian, and *gals* the end. Thus it appears to have been the country which bounded Lithuania. Livonia is now known as the government of Riga.

In the most remote times the Baltic provinces known as Livonia, Esthonia, Courland, and Semigallia, belonged to Russia, which imposed a tribute upon them, but did not interfere with their mode of government. Up to 1158 Livonia was unknown to the greater part of Europe, but was discovered at that date by the merchants of Bremen, who sought new markets in the north. These navigators disembarked at the mouth of the Dwina, and traded with the inhabitants; from that period Riga became a commercial emporium. Eighteen years after the first expedition, an Augustine monk, named Meinhard, established himself in Livonia, converted many of the people to Christianity, and became the bishop. He was followed by a small colony of Germans. At the end of the twelfth century, Canute the Sixth, king of Denmark, invaded Esthonia, seized the province, built churches, and converted or constrained the inhabitants to Christianity. To preserve Livonia, the bishop, in 1201, instituted the military order of the Knights Sword-bearers, who had the same constitution as the Knights-Templars, and received from the bishop one-third of the territory as their corporate property. They were all Germans. Ivan the Second endeavoured to recover those provinces, which had originally belonged to Russia; and his wars occasioned the division of Lithuania in 1561. Esthonia placed itself under the

protection of Sweden, Livonia united itself to Poland, and Courland was erected into a duchy, feudally dependent on Poland. Gothard Kettler, the last Grand Master of the Knights Swordbearers, received the investiture, and was the first duke of Courland. From that period the conquest of Livonia led to constant wars, which for a century exhausted the strength of Sweden, Poland, and Russia. By the peace of Oliva, Sweden united Livonia to Esthonia; but after twenty years of another war, Sweden ceded both provinces to Russia by the treaty of Nystadt in 1721, when the czar erected them into the governments of Riga and Revel. From 1561 the duchy of Courland remained a separate and independent state, but on the extinction of the line of Kettler, the first duke, Poland desired to absorb it as a fief of her kingdom; Russia interfered, and, in 1737, the nobility of Courland elected Ernest John de Biren their duke. When the royalty of Poland was destroyed, Courland could no longer maintain its isolated existence. In 1795, the States of the Duchy declared by a formal act that its feudal relations were annihilated, and they submitted unconditionally to Catharine the Second, Empress of Russia. Pilten, called the Chapter of Pilten, also a fief of Poland, followed the example of Courland. Polish Livonia, so called to distinguish it from Swedish Livonia, fell to the share of Russia on the partition in 1773, and was erected into the district of Dunabourg and Rezitsa, in the government of Polotsk.

We pass from the Slavonians to the Finnish, who hold the second rank among the diversified peoples of Russia. This race is remarkable for its antiquity; and from it many of the European nations descend. At a remote period they were dispersed from Scandinavia to the north of Asia, and thence to the Volga and Caspian. Their favourite abodes were in marshy lands, and they designated themselves "inhabitants of the marshes;" but their history is obscure. Excepting the Hungarians or Magyars (supposing they are Finnish, which is disputed), they have never formed an independent state; they have no annals of their

own, and their history is only to be read in the history of their conquerors. The Finnish were subjugated by the Norwegians, the Swedes, and the Russians. The Norwegians were the first who made themselves masters of a part of Northern Finland. Finmark, now known as Norwegian Lapland, paid them tribute. The Norwegians penetrated into Permia, attracted by the inducements of commerce and pillage ; but the Mongol invasions of Russia interrupted those expeditions, and when the princes of Novogorod seized Permia, the visits of the Norwegians were wholly discontinued.

The Russians were the second nation who subjected a portion of Northern Finland. When they first established themselves on the Volga, they lived on good terms with the Tchoude and Finnish, but ultimately conquered them. Carelia and a part of Kexholm, were the first places seized by the Russians of Ingria. On this account, all the Finnish under Russian domination, and even those who were neither natives of Carelia nor domiciliated in it, were called by the Norwegians Kyriales. At first the Russians only possessed the countries which border upon the Gulf of Finland (or Kyrialabota), and on Lake Ladoga up to the White Sea. At a later date they took possession of several other countries, which were desert, and had no known boundaries. The invasion of the Mongols, as already remarked, put a stop to the incursions of the Norwegians into Permia; and then the inhabitants of Novogorod extended themselves to the northward. In the fourteenth century Bishop Stephen converted the inhabitants of Permia to Christianity.

The Swedes were the last to extend their dominions northward. In the middle of the twelfth century St. Eric subjugated and converted the Finlanders; and, in the thirteenth century, they subjected the Laplanders.

It thus appears that the Finlanders of the north were subjugated by three different powers; but we have only to speak of those annexed to the Russian empire. They are divided into

thirteen nations, of which twelve, wholly or in part, live in Russia. These are the Laplanders, the Fins, the Esthonians, the Lives, the Tcheremisses, the Tchouraches, the Modvas, the Votiaks, the Permians, the Syrianes, the Vogoules, and the Ostiaks.

1. The Laplanders inhabit the most northern part of Scandinavia. The White Sea bounds them on the east, to which the territory runs from the North Cape to the extent of 600 miles. They received the name of Lappons, which means "magicians," from Saxo, who wrote in the twelfth century; but before his time they were called Caianians. Lapland is mountainous, covered with forests and intersected by lakes. It is divided into Norwegian, Swedish, and Russian Lapland. Norway has the north-western portion, Sweden the south, Russia the eastern. This last, under the political division of the Russian empire, forms but a circle in the government of Archangel, and its capital is Kola.

2. The Fins dwelt to the north-east of the Gulf of Bothnia and Finland; and the larger portion of this territory belonged to Sweden, the share of Russia only including Ingria, Kexholm, and Carelia, provinces which afterwards formed the government of Vibourg and part of St. Petersburg. Michael Romanof ceded to Sweden the last remainder of the Russian possessions in Finland; but the districts just referred to were given back by the treaties of Nystadt and Abo. The whole of Finland was conquered in 1809 by the Emperor Alexander.

3. The Esthonians occupied the southern shores of the Gulf of Finland, opposite Finland Proper. The word *Esthonia* signifies "a people of the East," and was adopted by several races settled on the Baltic. In the Russian annals the Esthonians are called Tchoudes; and they play a highly distinguished part in its history; for, in conjunction with the Slavonians of Novogorod, they founded the empire of Russia. It is from them that the Lake Peipus, now surrounded by the governments of St. Petersburg, Livonia, Esthonia, and Pskov, derives its Russian name of Tchoudskoie Ozero, that is, the Lake of the Tchoudes. Tchoudes means

“strangers.” It is evident, then, that this people formed an integral portion of the Russian monarchy in the remotest ages. In the troubles that ensued they frequently asserted their independence, though without success. Jaroslaf was compelled to make war against them; and in 1030, that czar founded the town of Dorpat, which the Muscovites still call Jourief, and placed in it a garrison to enable him to levy tribute.

The Czar Mstislaf marched against the Tchoudes and Semigallians, they having refused to pay a tax. The old duchy of Esthonia now forms the government of Revel.

4. The Lives have a doubtful origin. By some they are considered a distinct Finnish people; others blend them with the Esthonians. The Chronicler Nestor and Henry the Letton both class them as a particular nation, and state that, from the earliest times, they were tributaries to the Russian empire. Their numbers were very inconsiderable.

5. The Permians are a remarkable branch of the great Finnish family. In the traditions of Iceland they are known by the name of Biarmians. They inhabited the governments of Perm and Viatka, and the countries north of the river Oby. In the middle ages the Scandinavian corsairs gave the general name of Biarmia to the whole territory between the White Sea and the Oural. Tradition ascribes great wealth to the Permians. They trafficked with the Persians and Indians, who carried their trade from the Caspian up the Volga and Kama to Tcherdyn. The Permians extended it to the banks of the Petchora and the frozen sea, where they purchased skins and furs which they sold to the Orientals. The ruins of several towns still attest the flourishing commerce of this people in ancient times. When the expeditions of the Norwegians ceased in the year 1217, the republic of Novogorod seized on Permia, and sent thither some Russian colonies to retain the people in subjection. In 1372 Bishop Stephen converted them to Christianity. At the end of that century the Grand Duke Vassili Dmitrivitch disputed the possession of the country with the

authorities of Novogorod, and the latter renounced their pretensions. For a short period the Permians were permitted to choose their own magistrates; but in 1543 the Czar Ivan sent them their first governor, who resided first at Kholmogor, and afterwards at Archangel. The original boundaries of Biarmia can no longer be recognised; and the people have been so fused with the Russians, that even their language is forgotten.

6. The Syrianes were near neighbours of the Permians, being established in the governments of Vologda, Perm, and Tobolsk. They embraced Christianity early in the fourteenth century, and are not now distinguishable from the Russians.

7. The Vogoules or Vogoulitchi led a nomadic life, roaming over the countries to the north of the Oural mountains. They were subjected to the Russians before the discovery of Siberia, and located in the governments of Perm and Tobolsk.

8. The Votiaks or Votes dwelt on the banks of the Viatka, in the governments of Viatka and Oufa. Originally they were under the protection of the Tartars, and ultimately fell, with their masters, under the yoke of Russia. They then quitted their pastoral life, applying themselves to agriculture, and exchanged their tents for houses.

9. The Tcheremisses were established along the Volga, in the governments of Viatka, Kasan, Simbirsk, and Oufa. They called themselves Mari, which signifies "men." They were formerly under Tartar rule, then inhabiting more southern countries between the Volga and the Don. When first subjugated by Russia, they were allowed to retain their khans till their ancient line of princes was exhausted. They also passed from a pastoral to an agricultural pursuit.

10. The Tchouvaches were a very numerous tribe. They were scattered along the banks of the Volga, and were for the most part idolaters, sacrificing horses and eating their flesh; and in those acts their religious ceremonies mainly consisted.

11. The Mordvians or Mordvas dwelt on the Volga and Oka.

They were not so numerous as the Tcheremisses or the Tchouvaches, but still formed a considerable community. The Russians divided them into two principal tribes, called Mokchan and Ersan. According to some historians, they are the same people as the Meres or Meraines, whom Nestor mentions as one of the five nations who united near Lake Ilmen to found the Russian empire.

12. The Ostiaks of the Oby are the last people of Finnish race of whom we shall speak. When the Tartars conquered Siberia, they named all the inhabitants, of whom they only knew a portion, Ouchtiak, which signified a “foreign barbarian.” The Russians preserved this term, ignorant of its opprobrious meaning; but it was discontinued after they became better acquainted with Siberia. It was, however, perpetuated among the Ostiaks of the Oby, of the Narym, and of the Jennessai. The first alone of these three classes descend from the Fins, and trace themselves to the Permians.

From an admixture of these Finnish races, united with some Tartars, was formed a tribe called by the Russians Tepteri, which means, “men who never pay tribute.” They united themselves in the sixteenth century, during the troubles which agitated the kingdom of Kasan; and then located themselves in that portion of the Oural mountains which depends on the government of Oufa.

THE MONGOLS.

The history of this people, as conquerors of Russia, has been narrated by Rabbe; but some remarks may be offered as to their origin, and their ultimate partial absorption among the Russians. Originally they are supposed to have formed two nations; but they were united in one state under the famous Zingis or Gengis Khan. When this dynasty was destroyed, the two races were again separated, and ruined each other by their bitter feuds. One of them was distinctively called Mongols; the other was known by

the appellation of Derben-Ourait, a word signifying the "four allies." The denomination included the four following people: the Eleuths or Calmucks, the Khoits, the Tummits, and the Barga-Bourat.

The Eleuths formed that branch which inhabited the west of Asia, and spread to Europe under the better-known name of Calmucks. Only a fragment of the Khoits remains; so much were they thinned by wars and emigrations, that only some hordes of them exist in Songaria and Mongolia. The home of the Tummits is no longer known. The Barga-Bourat established themselves in the mountains which surround Lake Baikal, it is supposed, at the time of the conquest of Zingis. After the discovery of Siberia, that nation was subjected to Russia. Of these four peoples, the first and the last alone are the subjects of modern history.

Under the general name of Mongols are included the remainder of that people who, in the fourteenth century, were driven from China by the dynasty of the kings, and are now, for the most part, subject to the Mantchous, who expelled the kings, and now rule China. The rest of them are dependent on Russia. Since the overthrow of the power of Songaria, these peoples have inhabited the vast territory which lies between Siberia and China, from the Eastern Ocean up to Songaria. When Siberia was conquered by the Russians, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, the Mongols were still a free people, governed by their own khans; and many tribes of Siberia acknowledged their supremacy. These Mongols at first submitted to the arms of Russia, then reasserted their independence, and seconded the resistance of those Siberian tribes who had not yet received the yoke. They also carried on wars against the Calmucks, and often with signal success; but in these conflicts they lost their tribes one after the other. They also contended against the Chinese; but were finally subjugated. However, they yet dwelt in the lands of their ancestors, and appear to have been governed by their own princes. In the seventeenth century the Mongols placed

themselves under the sceptre of Russia; and it is probable this example would have been followed by many other tribes, had not a treaty between Russia and China bound the former to receive no more Mongol refugees.

The Russian Mongols were established in the province of Irkoutsk, in the government of that name, on the banks of the river Selinga.

The Eleuths or Calmucks are the most considerable section of Derben-Ourait, as well as of all the other Mongol peoples. They claim the country between Kokonoor, on the Blue Lake, and Thibet, as their original country. According to their traditions, long prior to the reign of Zengis, the large majority of them advanced westward, and dispersed themselves westward, in the vicinity of the mountains of Caucasus; those who remained in Grand Tartary were named by their neighbours the Tartars, Khalimak, which means "disunited." The word Eleuth also signifies a people separated or divided. After the destruction of the Mongol empire, the Eleuths or Calmucks were split into four different branches,—the Khochotes, the Derbets, the Songars, and the Torgots.

The larger part of Calmucks Khochotes remained in Thibet, near the Blue Lake; and when Songaria lost its power, those people lived under the protection of China. The remainder of the nation had long before retired to the Irtysh, and were subjugated by a Songarian horde. At length, having joined in a war against China, both nations were dispersed. Khochote means a "warrior;" and the tribe received that distinctive title from Zingis, on account of their remarkable valour. In 1675, fifteen hundred families of this race voluntarily submitted to Russia, and were established on the Volga.

When the Mongol empire was divided, the Songars and Derbets only formed one people. They subjected many of the Calmuck tribes; but were defeated by the Chinese, and dispersed. Before that event they could muster 50,000 fighting men. Their

grandeur lasted from 1696 to 1746; during which period the eastern towns of Bokharia and the great horde of the Kirgises paid them tribute. They dispersed themselves in the interior of Asia, and some thousands fled to Siberia; others became subjects of China. The number of Songars who sought refuge in Russia in 1758 was under 20,000: they were incorporated with the Calmucks of the Volga; but in 1770 the greater part of them returned to Songaria.

The Derbets, originally established in the neighbourhood of Kokonoor, advanced to the Irtish, when dissensions broke out among the Mongols, and divided themselves into two troops. The one, as already stated, joined the Songars and shared their lot; the other united themselves with the Torgots, and advanced westward to the Oural, spreading themselves to the Volga and the Don, where they settled themselves. In 1673, five thousand kubitkas (tents or families) subjected themselves to the khan of the Torgots, who then occupied the banks of the Oural, and did homage to the Czar of Russia. Afterwards the Derbet princes refused submission to the chiefs of the Torgots; and in 1743, on the death of their khan, Aiouka, they passed the Don. The Russian government, fearing that their khan, Lara Dondouk, might place himself under the protection of the khan of the Crimea, again transplanted this horde to the Volga, near the station of the Torgots. Alarmed at the prospect of being subjugated by that people, the Derbets did not join the famous flight of 1770.

The Torgots appear to have formed a separate horde at a later date than the other branches of the Calmucks. When they seceded from the Songars, they advanced to the steppes of the Volga, and there settled. The Russians called them the Calmucks of the Volga; and in 1616 they were subjected to the Czar. In 1662, when they had passed the Oural, they numbered 50,000 tents. In 1678, the Russian government imposed on this rich and powerful horde certain rules, which restrained the power of their khans. This interference excited such discontent,



VARNA, ON THE BLACK SEA.

that, in 1770-1, sixty thousand tents passed the Oural on the ice, traversed the steppes of the Kirgises, and returned to Songaria. This remarkable event, which revived the emigrations of ancient times in the eighteenth century, was occasioned by the new Russian law, which associated with the khan certain assessors or coadjutors in the government of the horde, whom he was not allowed to remove. But this was not the sole cause of the exodus. The people complained that the pasturage was not sufficient for their cattle; and the priests told them, that if they remained they would be compelled to embrace Christianity, constrained to become agriculturists, and obliged to furnish recruits for the army. The Russians pursued these fugitives, but with very small success, though many perished in the flight.

The Barga-Bourat, called by the Russians Bouriates and Bratski, are the last of the Mongolian peoples who can be regarded as a nation. It has already been observed that they formed one of the four branches of the Derben-Ourait. During the Mongol monarchy, or perhaps at an earlier date, the Bouriates retired to the rural and mountainous countries lying to the north of Lake Baikal. Whether they escaped the victorious arms of Zingis is doubtful; but it is certain that they regained their liberty, if ever lost, as soon as the Mongols were established in China. The Russians only knew the Bouriates after the conquest of Siberia. According to the treaties which prescribe the limits between that province and China, these people belong to Russia; and they are the most numerous of all the pagan tribes established in the government of Irkoutsk. They are scattered over the whole territory which lies between the Jennesséi and the Chinese frontier.

THE TARTARS.

The Tartars who belong to the empire of Russia inhabit the northern coasts of the Black Sea and of the Caspian, the country

northward of the Caucasus, the vast steppes of the Oural stretching to Songaria, and the southern portions of the Oural Mountains. They are also dispersed in parts of Siberia, from the Tobol to the Jennessi, and in the deserts which border on the river Lena; while some remnants of this ancient race exist in the governments of Oufa, Kasan, and Tobolsk. As these countries were in ancient times inhabited by the Mongolian Tartars, when that nation flourished, monuments of their former grandeur and civilisation have been discovered, some attesting an antiquity of a thousand years. Vestiges of ruined cities, inscriptions on monuments, and various objects found in their tombs, show that this nation, popularly deemed barbarous, was once highly cultivated. At Kazernof on the Oka there exists a suburb supposed to have been the ancient residence of a khan. An elevated round tower remains, with the ruins of a palace and mausoleum, built of cut stones and burnt bricks. Near to Astracan are the traces of an ancient city; and higher up the Volga, near Tsaritsyn, others of a similar character have been detected. The citadel of Kasan contains many monuments of Tartar domination. On the Irtysh, near Tobolsk, are the ruins of Siber; and generally throughout Siberia evidence of ancient cities has been discovered. In the St. Petersburg Museum of the Academy of Sciences may be seen vases, diadems, arms, warlike instruments, coins, and even dresses, which have been found in the tombs of the Tartars, both in Siberia and on the banks of the Volga. They are variously of gold, silver, and copper. The most ancient tombs are said to be 1100 years old.

The different branches of the Tartar race who belong to Russia are, the Tartars proper, the Nogais, the Metchericks, the Baskirs, the Kirgises, the Jakoutes, and the Teleoutes; to these may be added some tribes of the Caucasus. In fact, under the name of Tartars in Russia are included all the hordes who do not bear any specific denomination, but descend in common from the

two great kingdoms founded by Zingis* on the Volga and in Siberia.

The grand khanat of Kipzak was founded by Batou, or Bati, grandson of Zingis; and in the year 1441 it was divided into four khanats, those of Kasan, Astracan, Kipzak, and the Crimea. The first three were conquered by Russia in the middle of the sixteenth century; the fourth preserved its independence till 230 years later: they are now all reunited under the sceptre of the Czar. According to Gibbon, the "Daste Kipzak, or Plain of Kipzak, extends on either side of the Volga in a boundless space to the Jaik (now the Oural) and the Borysthenes (now the Dneiper), and is supposed to contain the primitive name and nation of the Cossacks."

The khanat of Kipzak, after the separation of 1441, was established in the plains known as the Steppes of Astracan, and was the first to fall. In the year 1506 it lost its first khan, and was parcelled out among the khanats of Kasan, Astracan, and the Crimea; finally, when these two former states were conquered, it passed over with them to Russia. The Kipzak Tartars, frequently subjugated, were reduced to extremely small numbers; and, wandering hither and thither, were blended with the Baskirs and Kirgises.

The khanat of Kasan formed a separate state up to the year 1552; at that date it was conquered by Ivan the Second, and permanently incorporated with Russia. The city of Kasan had been founded in 1257 by one of the sons of Batou, and became independent in 1441, in the same year in which the khanat of the Crimea was severed from that of Kipzak.

* The name of this conqueror is variously written. The French authors spell it "Dschingis." Gibbon says, "Since the history and tragedy of Voltaire, Gengis, at least in French, seems to be the more fashionable spelling; but Abulhazi Khan must have known the true name of his ancestor." His etymology appears just. Zin, in the Mongol tongue, signifies "great," and Gis is the superlative termination. From the same idea of magnitude, the appellation of Zingis is bestowed on the ocean.

The khanat of Astracan was organised shortly after that of Kasan. The victorious Ivan seized it in 1554. The modern town of Astracan is not the Tartar capital which that czar seized, for he destroyed it; the ruins of the old city may be seen higher up on the west bank of the Volga. The Tartars of Astracan chiefly belonged to the Nogais horde. They have dwindled away; for in 1774, even when united to the nomades of their race, they only amounted to 2000 families. This thinness of population is not to be attributed to any exterminating process, but to their unsettled and wandering habits, and their intermixture with the Baskirs and Kirgises, and with the Tartars of the Crimea and the Caucasus.

The khanat of the Crimea remained a distinct state up to 1783, when it was incorporated with Russia. The history of the Crimea commences many centuries before that of the grand khanat of Kipzak, and is traced to the Cimmerians, a numerous and war-like tribe sprung from Thrace. It was anciently known as the Taurica Chersonesus, and was considered by Pliny and Strabo to have been originally an island, as the isthmus of Perecop is now only five miles in breadth; but it does not fall within our province to ascend so high up the stream of history. In the eleventh century, Mengli-Guerai, founder of the Tartar empire in the Crimea, supported by the Osmanlis, established his power in the peninsula, acknowledging himself a vassal of the Porte, which exercised the right of levying customs and garrisoning the fortresses in the country. The Porte also claimed the right of electing and deposing the khans. In 1441 the Crimea became a separate khanat, when the empire of Kipzak was divided, under the rule of Hadji-Guerai. Under Anne, Empress of Russia, it was invaded by Marshals Munich and Lascy in 1736. It was again attacked in 1764, when the reigning khan, Krim-Guerai, was poisoned by a Greek physician. The Russians then elected Chalym-Guerai khan, and the Turks nominated Derlet-Guerai.

Russia drove out the latter under pretence of protecting its nominee, and garrisoned the fortresses of Kertch, Yeni-kale, and Kiboroun, on the Dneiper, with its own soldiers. The Crimea, however, remained under the protection of the Sublime Porte till 1774; but, by the peace of Koutchouk Kaidnardji, Catharine the Second restored the khan to his independence, but under her protectorate. In due season the crafty policy of Russia was matured; and in 1783 the whole peninsula was incorporated under the sceptre of the czars, with the eastern division of the territory of the Nogais, called the Steppes of the Crimea. The whole was placed under the government of Taurida.

The Siberian Tartars form the second branch of Tartars settled in Russia. The empire of the Tartar Mongols in Siberia, known as the khanat of Touran, was founded in the middle of the thirteenth century, by Sheibani-Khan, a brother of Batou, in the territory adjoining the Oural Mountains and the banks of the Oural River. The khans resided on the eastern bank of the Irtysh, and there founded the city of Isker, which afterwards received the name of Sibir, near to the site of Tobolsk. The last khan of Touran, before the conquest of Siberia by the Russians, was named Koutschoum, a descendant of Zingis, through the branch of Kipzak. He was the first who introduced the Mahometan religion into the country; but the doctrine was only partially established when the arrival of the Russians arrested its further propagation.

The Mankats, or Nogais, are another branch of Tartars. According to the Greek and Arabian historians, they owe their origin to a Mongol chief named Noga, or Nogai, who was sent by the Grand Khan of Kipzak, at the end of the thirteenth century, with a powerful army, to conquer the countries bordering on the Black Sea; and he subjugated all the territory between the Don and the Danube. Afterwards he revolted against the khan of Kipzak, and founded a kingdom of his own. "Their general, Noga," says Gibbon, "whose name is perpetuated in the hordes

of Astracan, raised a formidable rebellion against Mengo Timour, the third of the khans of Kipzak ; obtained in marriage Maria, the natural daughter of Palæologus ; and guarded the dominions of his friend and father." His successor did not retain his power ; but the name of its founder was preserved by the nation over which he had reigned. After the conquest by Russia, the Nogais occupied the steppes to the north of the Caucasus and of the Black Sea up to the Danube, and some of them were scattered along the Kouban and the banks of the Volga. The territory formerly known as the Eastern Nogais now forms the principal northern division of Taurida. The Russians call it the Steppes of the Crimea. By the Peace of Belgrade, in 1739, Russia obtained more than half of this territory, and it now constitutes part of the government of Catherinoslaf. The remainder, which had belonged to the khans of the Crimea, was ceded to Russia in 1783, at which date the czars obtained the whole of the Crimea and the Eastern Nogais, with the northern part of the Kouban up to the mountains of Caucasus.

The Baskirs are descended from the Nogais and the Bulgarians ; and it seems that, during the early convulsions, some of the former sought shelter with the Bulgarians, and became blended with them. The primitive Baskirs led a nomadic life in southern Siberia, where they were disturbed by the Siberian khans ; and emigrating to the Volga and Oural, placed themselves under the protection of the khan of Kasan. When that khanat was conquered by Ivan the Second, they submitted voluntarily to the Russians, though afterwards they frequently revolted.

The Kirgises have been called the Cossacks of the Steppes. According to their traditions, they are of Nogais origin ; but their history is uncertain, as they only became known to Europe after the conquest of Siberia by the Russians. When first discovered they led a nomadic life near the sources of Jennessai.

The Teleoutes, or Telengoutes, took their name from Lake Telengoul in the Altai Mountains. The Russians call them

White Calmucks, because they formerly lived among the Songarians. In 1609 they first rendered homage to Russia, and several of their tribes ascended the Tom.

The Jakoutes are of Tartar origin. They formerly lived near the Lena ; but at a later date crossed that river, and established themselves in the rural districts of the present government of Irkoutsk, stretching from both banks of the Lena to the Frozen Ocean.

Between the Caspian and Lake Aral is Little Bokharia. It is surrounded by Persia, the northern part of India, and several small Tartar states. Bokhara, the capital, is about 1000 English miles from Orenbourg. The inhabitants of this district trace their origin to the Turcomans, who established themselves in the country during the Tartar invasion. Their government was monarchical. The khan was always chosen out of princely families ; their authority was limited, and they might be deposed, though that rarely happened. Bokharian colonies have for a long period been found in Siberia. They are established in the neighbourhood of Tobolsk, Tara, Tomsk, and in the governments of Oufa and Astracan.

The Khivenses, otherwise called Kharases, formerly lived at the mouth of the Oural ; they now occupy the country to the east of Lake Aral. Khiva, their capital, is about 700 versts, or about 460 English miles, from Orenbourg. The Bokharians, the Khivinses, the Turkestans, and Tachkeutes, bear to each other so close a resemblance, that they are supposed to be of a common origin.

The Mantchous and Tongouses descend from a common stock, as evidenced by their traditions, their language, and their physical appearance. They occupied very extensive but desert regions extending to the east of Siberia and the north of Mongolia. Before the Russians penetrated into Siberia, the Mantchous possessed all Daouria, on the eastern part of Siberia, from Lake Baikal to the mountains of Mongolia, and the countries watered

by the Amoor and the different branches of that river. They were then divided into different hordes. The Daourians dwelt on the banks of the Selinga and near the sources of the Amoor; the Doutharians between the Argoun and the Chilka; the Atchasses on the banks of the Amoor, and the Giliakes at the mouth of that river, and on the coasts of the Eastern Ocean. The Daourians did not await the arrival of the Russians in their country, but retreated into China. When the Russians made their first invasion, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the Daourians and the Doutharians were subjects of the Chinese empire, and the Chinese emperor favoured and protected their flight. The Giliakes and the Atchasses were then independent, but submitted to Russia without offering any resistance. Ultimately Russia concluded a treaty with China, by which all the Mantchous belonging to Russia, and also the banks of the Amoor, were ceded to the court of Pekin. The chain of mountains named Stannosi-Kherebet, which stretch from the north-east of Daouria, between the Lena and the Amoor, to the Eastern Ocean, formed the boundary between the two nations. Those frontier mountains were not inhabited by Mantchous but by Tongouses, who lived in independence, paying a tribute either to China or Russia.

The Mantchous, especially the Daourians, were not a barbarous people when they lived in Russia. According to their traditions, they led a nomadic life, but were acquainted with civil institutions. Always at peace with their neighbours, they applied themselves to agriculture, reared cattle, and even worked mines. On the banks of several rivers traces exist of canals dug for the irrigation of their fields and gardens. The mines of Daouria are now celebrated as the mines of Nertchink.

Formerly the Mantchous and the Tongouses were one and the same people. This is demonstrated not only by the similarity of their physiognomy, but by their manners and customs, and the analogies of language. There are, indeed, ancient monuments in

the country of the Mantchous which are not found in that of the Tongouses, but the former acknowledge that they were not built by their ancestors; whence it follows that the territory, at some remote period, was inhabited by some other nation, who had either been expelled by the Mantchous or had quitted it voluntarily. Among themselves the Tongouses are called Oevoen, the name of their first chief. They are also called Boie, signifying "men," according to the usage of many of the Siberian hordes. The Ostiaks of the Jennessei and the Tartars are the only people who give them the appellation of Tongouses. It is probable that Tongou was a title of honour assumed by their prince, as the name is still preserved among the Russians. They are also known by the name of Orontchou, signifying "reindeer men." The vast deserts over which they wandered stretch from the west towards the east, from the Jennessei beyond the Lena, and up to the Amoor and the Eastern Ocean. The largest portion of the country of the Tongouses is included in the government of Irkoutsk, though some of the hordes are established in that of Tobolsk.

In addition to the races already spoken of, there are many others in Russia whose origin is entirely unknown. They are divided into two classes, the Samoeides and the people of Eastern Siberia.

The Samoeides lead a nomadic life in the most frightful deserts, can neither write nor reckon, and have no other knowledge of their origin than such as is preserved in ballad or tradition. When conquered by the Russians, they had already quitted the temperate regions inhabited by their forefathers, who had been driven out by the Tartars. When discovered, they were but fugitive and disorganised hordes, having lost their national character and changed their mode of life. The people, who are called the true Samoeides to distinguish them from the European Samoeides, live near the Frozen Ocean; they do not occupy

Nova Zembla, though to the eastward of the Jennessi they are found along the coast up to the 75th degree of latitude.

The European Samoeides are established to the west of the Oural, and have been tributary to Russia since 1525, consequently long before those of Siberia. They live in the countries lying between the rivers Mezen and Petchora, in the governments of Archangel and Wolgoda, where they are isolated from all other peoples. The Samoeides of Siberia are located to the west of the Oural Mountains, in the government of Tobolsk, along the coasts of the Strait of Vaigatch, at the mouth of the Oby, between that river and the Jennessi, and near the mouths of the Lena. These people united are more numerous than the Ostiaks; but they are widely scattered over these vast regions.

The Ostiaks are divided into three classes; those of the Oby, those of the Narym, and those of the Jennessi. The first are undoubtedly of Finnish origin; that of the other two is very uncertain. The Ostiaks of the Narym are dispersed from the banks of the Oby up to the Narym, and the mouths of the Ket and Tom. The Ostiaks of the Jennessi follow the same kind of existence as the other two races known by the same name; but they speak a different dialect, and hence it is inferred that they are of a different race. They live on the lower part of the river, and are surrounded by Samoeides.

The nations or hordes included under the general denomination of the "people of Eastern Siberia" are the Joukagirs, the Kamtschatkans, the Koriaks, the Tchoutchi, the Kuriles, and Aleoutes, who inhabit the American archipelago to the north-east of Siberia.

The north-east part of the Siberian continent was known to the Russians at the close of the seventeenth century; but the conquest was delayed by the natural obstacles of climate and position. Kamtschatka was only known by name in 1690; but in 1696 possession was taken of it. The Kurile Islands were discovered

in 1716. The navigator Behring commenced the maritime expedition known by his name in 1727, and which lasted down to 1741. It was then that the north-eastern coasts of Siberia, the islands lying between Siberia and America, and the continent of that part of the world, were discovered, mapped, and traversed.

The Joukagirs inhabit the most northern portions of the territory of the Jakouts, but were not completely subjected before the year 1639. They had never seen a horse; but that animal was known to the Jakouts. The former appear for a very long period to have been shut up in their mountains and frozen marshes.

The chain of naked and sterile rocks which forms the peninsula of Kamtschatka, has, to all appearance, been for ages the abode of particular peoples: the Koriaks in the northern part towards the continent, and the Kamtschatkans at the extremity of the peninsula. The origin and history of these people is quite unknown. It is probable that the word Kora, which signifies a "reindeer" in the dialect of the Koriaks, supplies the etymology of their name: they live in the north part of the Gulf of Penjinsk and the north of Kamtschatka, in the midst of the Tongouses, the Lamoutes, and the Tchouktchi. The history of their neighbours makes no mention of the Koriaks; this circumstance, and their resemblance to the islanders of the Eastern Ocean and to the Americans on the other side of the strait, has led to the conjecture that this people, as well as the Tchouktchi, are of American origin, and that the two races for a very long period have inhabited the Siberian coasts. Perhaps the sea, in separating those two portions of the globe, shut them in where they are now found.

The Tchouktchi occupy the promontory to the north-east of Siberia, between the Frozen and Eastern Oceans. These people so closely resemble the Koriaks, that they are supposed to be of the same descent.

The Kuriles inhabit the islands of that name in the Eastern Ocean. All do not bear the same name, and they differ in language and modes of living.

The Aleoutes occupy the chain of islands which stretch towards Kamtschatka, extending in a north-easterly direction to the American continent.

The Russian historians consider that this mixed community consists of nearly a hundred different original stocks, most of which still retain their primitive and distinctive characteristics. Among them the principle of fusion has acted feebly and slowly. Under physical, moral, and religious aspects, in regard to manners, usages, dress, dwellings, domestic furniture, and even military weapons, marked differences are still perceptible. The great object of Russian autocracy is unity in all departments of the government; and that is the problem to be solved in an empire containing such heterogeneous elements.

CHAPTER II.

SKETCH OF THE POLITICAL AND PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE EMPIRE.

THE Russian Colossus, its back against the extremities of the globe, one foot in Europe and the other in Asia, stretches its gigantic arms from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, over sixteen hundred leagues of territory. Without the Asiatic provinces, over which the Czars arrogate a doubtful sovereignty, they would still be the mightiest potentates in the world, if the strength of kingdoms were measured in square miles. The Arctic Sea to the north; in the south, Independent Tartary and Chinese Tartary; in the west, Lapland, the Gulf of Finland, the Baltic Sea, and Poland; in the east, the Pacific Ocean, and the several seas which receive their names from the coasts they bathe,—such is the enormous framework which contains the different regions known by the name of Russia.

But I consider that this broad outline should be indicated with more exactitude, and that the details should be filled in; therefore, borrowing from geographers their precise and methodical system, I shall draw a map of Russia, the better to fix the ideas of the reader, and render them more clear and permanent.

Russia extends from Europe into Asia, between the 19th and the 188th degrees of longitude, and between the 40th and 78th degrees of latitude.

The Arctic Ocean, from Kola to Behring's Straits, forms the northern frontier of Russia; the seas of Kamtschatka and of Ochotsk bathe its eastern coast from the Eastern Cape to the river Amoor; the straits of Behring and Cook separate Russia

from America. By virtue of the convention made with China in 1723, the boundaries of the two empires were fixed, starting from the sea of Ochotsk by the Stanovovi Mountains, then turning to the south-west as far as the Gorbitza, which throws itself into the Schilka, a little above the Amoor. From this river the boundaries run along the left bank of the Argoun to the mouth of the Chilan, traverse mountains and deserts washed by the Tere-neir, the Oltsa, and the Upper Onan, up to the Taschikoi, as far as the Salenga and Kiatcha; thence the limits follow the borders of Lake Baikal, pass by the Tunka, and run down the northern declivities of the mountains which form the confines of Siberia, and cut the Irkoutsk, the Oka, and Oda, running to the west and south-west by the Jenessei. From this river the boundaries follow Chinese Songaria and Mongolia, below the Upper Abakoun, by the Mrasa and the Tom; the line from Kousnetz stretches from the Tom to the Oby, traverses the Kolyvan Mountains, from the lower chain of the Altai to Irtisch, near to Outskamenoghorsk; there commences the line from the Irtisch, which stretches up to Omsk, across the Kirgis Steppes up to the Oural. The line from Oremberg then leads to Gourgief, on the Caspian Sea. The steppes of the Lower and Middle Kirgis run up to the Songarian Mountains. From Gourgief, the boundaries of Russia are at the Volga and the Terek, the Caspian Sea, Persia, a part of Mount Caucasus, Kouban, the Sea of Azof, and the Black Sea. The government of Cherson touches Bessarabia and Moldavia. In the west, Russia is bounded by Gallicia, the grand duchy of Warsaw, Prussia, the Baltic, the Gulf of Finland, the Gulf of Bothnia, and the Tornea, which separates it from Sweden; at the north-west by Finmark, a province of Norway.

Russia also possesses the following islands. In the Northern Ocean, Nova Zembla and the Vaigatch Islands; in the Pacific, the Kurilie, the Aleutian, and Behring's Islands; in the Baltic Sea, Oesel, Dago, the Aland group, and several other small islands in the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia. Russia has also several

establishments on the coast of North America. . She has taken under her protection several peoples in Caucasus and Tartary. These vast countries, containing an area of 340,361 miles, are divided into fifty governments, with the exception of the islands named, and Georgia, the country of the Cossacks of the Don, Derbend, the Kirgis Steppes, Nova Zembla, and the Russian colonies in America. Of these governments, some are administered by direct delegations from the crown, and others by magistrates nominated by the inhabitants, by virtue of traditional constitutions. The Oural Mountains separate European from Asiatic Russia. Russia in Europe, much less extended than Russia in Asia, is in general a flat country: it is only in its southern and eastern regions that mountains rise to a considerable altitude; those which occupy the centre are low. In the north are great lakes; in the south, vast steppes; the ground sinks towards the Baltic and the North Sea, and, in the direction of the south, towards the Black and Caspian Seas. Asiatic Russia is a vast plain, intersected here and there by mountains; it dips gradually towards the Northern Ocean, and rises but little towards the south till it reaches the lofty mountains which divide Russia from China. Both regions may be classed relatively to their temperature in the following order of arrangement.

The *Arctic* or icy region comprehends, in European Russia, a part of the government of Archangel and of Finland; and in Asiatic Russia, a part of the governments of Perm, Tobolsk, and Irkoutsk. In the countries situated beyond the 67th degree of north latitude, nature presents itself under the aspect of a dull and saddening uniformity. There are neither trees nor shrubs, but deserts covered with moss and turf-bogs, which continue in a north-easterly direction up to a section of the Ochotsk Mountains, and towards the extreme north-west up to the mountains of Russian Lapland. The earth never thawing, renders the soil rebellious to all culture; brambles and thorns take the place of forests; the animals are stunted in growth, and never attain the

strength of their species as displayed in other climates ; and the outward appearance of man betrays extreme degradation. The Laplander, the Samoeyed, the Tschouktchi alone vegetate in these inhospitable regions ; attended by the reindeer, their faithful companion, they live in isolated groups, and procure a scanty subsistence by hunting and fishing. In Siberia, the arctic region commences at the 62d degree of latitude ; and nature appears to be more of a stepmother towards this country than to the most northern division of Europe. The cold is so severe, that mercury freezes in the month of September, and becomes malleable. The Northern Ocean and the White Sea are covered with thick ice from the end of September to the beginning of June. The rivers which empty themselves into those seas are frozen at an earlier, and thaw at a later date. During the summer, a short season, and which does not melt the ice in the marshes, the atmosphere is constantly loaded with fogs, which resemble smoke. In Nova Zembla and at Cape Tschouktchi, the sun shows itself on the horizon during three months ; the rest of the year is a frightful winter. The long nights of that season are, however, relieved by the magnificent spectacle of the aurora borealis. At Oumba the longest day is thirty hours ; at Kola, in the 68th degree of latitude, it is sixty hours. During this period the sun appears as a mass of red fire. Storms are so rare in this region, that when it thunders the wild beasts stand motionless, stupified by terror. Under such a climate cultivation is annihilated ; trees gradually diminish in height, degenerate into creeping plants, and then disappear. However, in that part of this region which belongs to Europe, wheat generally ripens up to the 65th degree of latitude, and spring is not despoiled of all its charms. Scurvy and hypochondria are very prevalent in the frozen zone.

The *cold* region extends from the 57th to 67th degree : comprehending, in Europe, all Finland, and the governments of Petersburg, Novgorod, Pleskov, Revel, Riga, Miltau, Olonetz, Vologda, Tver, Jaroslav, Kostroma, and Viatka ; in Siberia, the



ST. PETERSBURG, FROM THE NEVA.

remainder of the governments of Perm and Tobolsk, and the centre of that of Irkoutsk. The chain of Scandinavian mountains, covered with vast forests, occupies the western portion of the European region; but thence to the Ural the eye only beholds vast plains intersected by a few hills: woods, marshes, and lakes appear in succession. This region presents an aspect still more frightful in Siberia, where the sea-breeze never softens the rigour of the climate, where the industry of man never comes to the aid of nature, and where nothing arrests the fatal blast of the north wind. From the Jenessei to the Eastern Ocean the soil rests on rock. Immense forests cover the whole of this space, cultivated in very few spots by some Europeans; but it is for the most part inhabited by miserable nomadic and hunting tribes. It is here that Russia possesses its most important mines of iron and copper.

The *temperate* region, comprehended between the 50th and 57th degrees of latitude, forms the greatest part of the empire; and comprises, in Europe, the governments of Moscow, Vladimir, Kalouga, Toula, Riasan, Tambov, Orel, Kursk, Voronetz, the Ukraine, Saratov, Nischegord, Penza, Kasan, Smolensko, Simbirsk, Tchernigov, Pultawa, Witepsk, Mohilef, Wilna, and Kief; in Asia, the governments of Tomsk, Orenburg, and the southern part of that of Irkoutsk. This range of country presents in Europe a vast open surface; but varied in the direction of the Oural Mountains by slight elevations of ground, whose undulations break the uniformity of the level. The northern parts of this region are covered with a thin and sandy soil little favourable to agriculture. The southern parts, on the contrary, are sufficiently fertile not to require manure. In Europe, the climate of this zone is equal, mild, and well adapted to animal and vegetable life, and on a happily-varied soil offers in general a picturesque and fertile appearance.

The *hot* region extends from the 41st to the 50th degree of latitude; and comprehends, in European Russia, the governments

of Kamenetz, Catherinoslav, Taurida, Kerson, Astracan, the Caucasus, Georgia, and Derbend; and in Asiatic Russia, the Steppes of the Kirgis. The eastern part of southern Russia is covered with immense steppes, arid, rarely wooded, and with a niggardly soil, except that of the Cossacks, which abounds in pasturage. At the west, on the banks of the Borysthenes* and the Dneister, the land is fertile. Georgia is the Switzerland of Russia; the Caucasus shelters it against the north winds; it is open to the south, and to all the warm breezes of Asia. There fine timber abounds, and almost all the fruits of southern countries. Taurida is not less fruitful; this beautiful country only needs culture to become an enchanting garden. The temperature sometimes reaches 28° of Reaumur's thermometer at Astracan; and rains are so infrequent, that, without the aid of artificial irrigation, all the plants would perish. In the steppes the heat is often so excessive, that the air produces on the unmoistened eye the effect of an interposing film of the tenuity of a spider's web between it and external objects; and a bloody froth oozes from the mouths of sheep. Tempests, and swarms of locusts, which frequently devastate whole provinces, are calamities common in this zone. Thus the Russian empire, within its vast area, includes every diversity of climate, and almost every zone. Spring sometimes unfolds all its charms in Taurida, when the environs of St. Petersburg are yet covered with snow; the orchards in the Caucasus are white with blossom, while the reindeer is still seeking, under a frozen envelope, the moss on which he feeds; the Kirgis lives under a perpetually-smiling sky, the Tschouktschi vegetates in a nine-months' winter.

The population scattered over this immense surface was estimated by Storch at 40,000,000 of souls; but this estimate, founded on an incomplete or inexact census, has appeared too low to

* Borysthenes, the modern Dneiper, signifies a rampart formed by a forest of pines; from *bor*, "a pine-forest," and *stena*, "a wall." J. D.

many statisticians. Asiatic Russia only furnishes a contingent of 3,000,000 to this enormous total, which, nevertheless, only gives 119 individuals to the square mile—a proportionate population far below that which is remarked in the least-crowded states of Europe.

We have now acquired some knowledge of the vast extent of the theatre on which the events to be described have been performed; and if that knowledge in some degree offends the laws of euphony, if the ears of the too-sensitive reader are shocked by this collection of barbarous names, let it be remembered that the muse of modern history is not Clio, the muse of the ancients; and that, generally speaking, the strings of its lyre, more rigid than flexible, and its voice, more energetic than melodious, only emit hoarse and rugged sounds. In entering upon the annals of Russia, we must specially arm ourselves with resignation and patience; for no history offers less consolation to the soul, or less food to the imagination. As an introduction to these sad and gloomy scenes, we discover no brilliant fictions, no heroic fables, by which almost all nations have sought to elevate their origin; we see no divine legislators, or legislators deified: noble falsehoods which attest the excellence of human nature, by revealing that eternal instinct which prompts it to seek its cradle in the skies!

The historians of Russia commence their recital with the Scandinavian Rourik, in nearly the same manner as the French historians start with Pharamond; but with this difference, that the initial date with the Russians is the ninth century. But monarchies do not spring from the bosom of the earth grand and armed, as Minerva from the brain of Jupiter; it is only after long vicissitudes and painful oscillations that they stand firm, and settle down on regulated institutions and positive enactments; so that between the first great man who was the founder, or the fortunate soldier who laid the first stone of the throne, and the successor who occupies it when completed, several centuries generally intervene. It is thus, at least, that have been slowly

formed the different states which history has placed in the foremost rank in its description of great political aggregations.

If we could dedicate several volumes to the events of which this history is composed, we might feel under an obligation to imitate those writers, whether national or foreign, who have treated on the same subject; but since we only aim at a summary, we shall follow a more philosophic course, from necessity as well as from choice. So that, setting aside five whole centuries of historical obscurity, we shall commence this abridgment towards the close of the fourteenth century; that is to say, at the epoch when, after long throes and agonies, and a dismal feudal anarchy, the different dominions of the descendants of Rourik, united and centralised anew, liberated from the yoke of the Tartars and avenged on them, constitute the Russia we now behold. Of the forty or fifty reigns which fill up this lapse of five hundred years, the four or five first will alone arrest our attention; it was through the conquests of those warlike founders that Russia constituted herself a state, and took rank on the political theatre of the middle ages. It was then that Christianity introduced itself, and with it new manners. But after Vladimir and Jaroslaf, neglecting the names of princes destitute of genius or glory,—a fastidious series, whose chronology is more than doubtful,—we shall replace these annals of a barbarous royalty by a sketch of the Russian nation during this first epoch. A glance at the primitive constitution of this empire, and at its customs and laws, will teach us what was its progress, and why it failed to advance in a parallel career with other peoples in the route of European civilisation. It is by observing the starting-point of a people, and its commencements, that we can best judge the merits of the successive transformations.

The Russian was one, and perhaps the most powerful of Sclavonic hordes which, at an early period, migrated from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, after the fall of the *Roman empire*. It does not belong to our subject to inquire

whether the Slavonians generally came from Asia; moreover, the question is now very nearly decided, and it is admitted by the most learned men of our days, that the European Slavonians are an indigenous race. The name of Russians may be derived from the Latin term *Rhoxani* or *Rhoxalani*, given by the ancients to those races who, from time immemorial, have inhabited the central parts of Russia. It may with equal propriety be derived from *Rossa* or *Rosseie*, which, in the Slavonic language, denotes a wandering people. Others pretend that the Russians were formerly a separate people, afterwards confounded with the Slavonians, who hold a certain rank in the history of the northern nations since the fourth century; but the Slavonians themselves were not a new people. Several branches of that people were known from the times of the Greeks and Romans; and it might be inferred from the analogy of their language with that of the ancient inhabitants of Latium, that their origin ascends to that of the earliest known people, the parent people. Their name appears to have been derived from *Slava*, which signifies “glory.” We have converted it into the ignoble denomination of Esclavonians, or bondsmen.

The Slaves, or Esclavonians, at the epoch of the irruption of the Germanic tribes, about the fourth or fifth centuries, inhabited the southern part of Poland, now known as White Russia, or Grand Russia. Under the name of Venedi, or Serabians, they established themselves in Pomerania, the marches of Brandenburg, and advanced as far as Silesia, Bohemia, and Moravia. New swarms of Slaves peopled the banks of the Danube, gave their name to Esclavonia, to Servia, and extended themselves to Austria. They are to be traced to a district or canton bordering on Croatia and Styria, which has preserved the name of Vindismark. The dialects of these various nations fortify the hypothesis of their common origin; for they are but variations of the ancient Slave or Esclavonian language.

FIRST EPOCH.

IN those countries now subjected to absolutism formerly flourished a republic. Novgorod, the most ancient city in Russia, enriched by a vast commerce, was self-governed by magistrates freely chosen by popular election. That city traded with the peoples who dwelt on the shores of the Black Sea; and the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetes, who wrote in the ninth century, speaks of the traffic it carried on during his reign with Constantinople. This commerce with the East probably began at an early period; that conclusion is to be drawn from the nature of the articles of which it was composed. In fact, slaves, skins, salted and smoked fish, and other provisions, honey, wax, and salt, are such products as all peoples could furnish, without excepting those who led a nomadic life. The Russians received in exchange wine, cloth, and stuffs.

The republicans of Novgorod received tribute from the nations by whom they were surrounded, from Lithuania to the mountains which border on Siberia, and from the lakes Ilmen and Bieloe up to the White Sea. They were so formidable to their neighbours, that it was a common saying, "Who dare attack God or Novgorod the Great?" This power and prosperity supposed conquests, and the conquests could only have been achieved by commanders of military reputation; hence arose the personal influence of individuals,—superiority through deeds or birth, aristocracy; hence popular factions, espousing the passions of their chiefs, anarchy, corruption of the national spirit, the enfeeblement of the state, an appeal to foreigners by the vanquished minority, by the discontented; hence, in a word, the loss of liberty.

The republicans of Novgorod became tributary to a people of Scandinavian origin, known by the name of Varangians. Having recovered their independence after a period of oppression, they no longer considered themselves fit for liberty, or judged that liberty was not fit for them, and demanded princes from the Varangians, their former conquerors. It is at this epoch that the arrival of Rourik, and of his brothers Sinav and Trevor, in Russia is dated. It is unknown how that revolution was effected; all that is ascertained is, that Varangian chiefs, at first auxiliaries, were not slow in making themselves masters. A nation should protect itself; for he who has power to defend, has power to oppress.

Rourik, invested with great military authority, only thought of extending it; and he completely succeeded. The inhabitants of Novgorod, wearied by the protection of his sword, revolted; at their head was Vadimir, whom the chroniclers celebrate for his valour: but Vadimir, conquered, was slain by the hand of Rourik; and his abortive resistance only riveted the chains of the Novgorodians. The death of both his brothers, without issue, strengthened the personal rule of Rourik. He conferred towns on his principal warriors. It is uncertain whether he bestowed them on military tenure, after the fashion of the northern barbarians; or whether he only appointed local governors, in which case he would only have established fiefs liable to resumption.

Having confirmed his authority at Novgorod, Rourik desired to enjoy in peace the power he had usurped; but this excited the contempt of his immediate subjects, the Scandinavian Varangians. War and brigandage forming the chief element in the existence of those people, it necessarily followed that the qualities they most estimated in a chief were ferocious valour, warlike restlessness, devastating activity. Rourik, however, reigned tranquilly, after having repressed his immediate subjects by terrorism; and left his crown to an infant son, four years of age, named Igor, whom he confided to the tutelage of his relative Oleg.

Oleg enlarged by conquest the inheritance of his ward. Having collected under his banner vast hordes of different origins, speaking different languages,—Slaves, Tchoudes, and Varangians,—he marched against the Krevitchians, and took from them Smolensko, their capital, and Lubitch. The large number of towns in Russia at the earliest historical epochs, proves that a social organisation had for a long period existed in that country. Nomadic peoples had rushed over it like torrents, inspiring alarm; but time and industry soon repaired their ravages. The natives of Russia lived in permanent abodes, and subsisted by the culture of the soil and the tending of sheep. Its towns bore no resemblance to those magnificent cities which are the ornaments of Europe, the retreats of ease or idleness, of talent and industry; but men dwelling in rude cabins are very far removed from the condition of savages. The authors of the old chronicles of Russia, instead of speaking of the building of a town, speak of cutting out a town (*roubit-gorod*), as we speak of cutting or sawing a piece of timber: for the art of construction in those days consisted in nothing more than in felling and rudely squaring trees, of which the houses were built; when the joints or openings were filled up with moss, the building was completed.*

Oleg next seized on Kief, not as a brave warrior, but by base perfidy. He drew into a snare Oskold and Dir, two brothers who reigned there; and when they were in his presence, he lifted the young Igor in his arms, saying to them, “You are neither princes nor of a princely race; behold the son of Rourik! perish in his sight!” They were strangled in the name of legitimacy, and Kief became the centre of the dominions of Rourik’s descendants.

Oleg next descended the Dneiper, and arrived under the walls of Constantinople, in 904, during the reign of Leo the Philosopher, with 80,000 combatants. This voyage on the Borysthenes, the channel of which is obstructed by sand-banks and rocks, was

* Levesque.



THE ANDREISKY CHURCH, KIEF.

not so easy as that of the Normans on the Seine, when they went to sack and burn old Paris; and the fatigues and labours those barbarians underwent astonish modern weakness. Such men were very formidable; Leo was aware of the fact; and after a vain attempt to poison the Russian army, he purchased peace at a costly price. However, the evils inflicted by the barbarians on the surrounding country were immense; for with them, to conquer was to ravage, destroy, annihilate.

The victors returned to their country loaded with gold, rich stuffs, the exquisite wines and delicious fruits of Greece. By buying peace with such tempting gifts, the Greeks held out the strongest inducements to tempt again the warlike passions and the avarice of their enemy. It appears that a treaty of commerce and friendship with the Greek empire followed this truce. This document, preserved by the old Russian annalists, serves to convey an idea of the legislation of those times. We learn from it that the laws of the Varangians—for it may be presumed that Rourik imposed those of his own country on the territory he had conquered—attached great importance to oaths: this is the characteristic of all peoples still in a state of simplicity. Those laws sentenced a murderer to death, and did not permit a pecuniary composition. Wives had a share in the property of their husbands. The punishment of crimes never involved the entire confiscation of property; and the widow and the orphan were not made responsible for acts in which they had not participated. Theft, which only attacks riches, was punished by the privation of riches. Thus the apportionment of penalties to offences—a subject so embarrassing among the moderns enlightened by highly cultivated reason—common-sense appears to have revealed to barbarism.

We read in the preamble to this treaty, that it results from the will of the prince, supported by the consent of all; from which it may be inferred that Oleg was the chief of a free people: but all those men who consented to acts of sovereignty were Russian

or Scandinavian Varangians led by Rourik. Thus it is, that in the ancient histories of all peoples who succeeded the Roman Empire we detect traces of liberty; but that liberty only belonged to the companions of the conqueror, to those who aided him in retaining the conquered people in bondage; or, at the most, it was only shared by a small number of those who placed their fortunes under the safeguard of their new rulers; and in proof of this limitation, we have seen discontent break out under Rourik, and no doubt the same occurred under Oleg. Unhappy the people, unhappy the individual, who is obliged to seek a protector or receive a master!

During thirty-three years Oleg exercised supreme authority: whether because the Russians, satisfied with the goodness of his government, troubled themselves little about his legitimacy; or whether, coerced by his vigorous hand, none dared to raise their voices in favour of the son of Rourik. The tacit acquiescence of the people in this sort of usurpation was, perhaps, in those days, a better title than hereditary right.

Igor, to whom the death of Oleg restored his ancestral claims, encountered, on ascending the throne, an insurrection fomented by all the peoples who had become tributary to Russia during the rule of the latter. He conquered, and compelled them again to bear the yoke: but a nation hitherto unknown, issuing from the banks of the Jiak and the Volga, for a long time tested his courage; they were the Petchenegnuans, a people of Turcoman origin, who afterwards became equally formidable to the Russians and the Greeks. Igor, after having made a treaty with them, directed his predatory incursions towards the frontiers of the Greek empire. The people of this eastern empire, rich and enervated, were a prey naturally destined for the men of the north, who were poor, and hardened to the toils of war; so that nothing is more frequent during this first epoch of Russian history than incursions towards the south. The Russians had then the ascendancy of barbarism over a mouldering civilisation. In our days this tendency to aggrandisement seems

still essential to the destiny of that empire ; but, by an inverted order, its superiority over the populations of the East is now founded on the advantages of a growing civilisation opposed to the effeteness of superannuated barbarism.

Ten thousand barks conveyed the army of Igor. Each of those barks carried forty men ; the Russian prince therefore advanced at the head of 400,000 combatants. This fact, if it be exact, may be added to the mass of those which seem to attest the singular fecundity of the northern nations during a certain period of the middle ages. The cause of this prodigious population is difficult to determine in our days, where nothing justifies the expression of the Gothic writer Jornandes, when, in speaking of the northern climes, he calls them *officina generis humani*.

Igor devastated Paphlagonia, Pontus, and Bithynia. All the troops of the empire were far away ; and the impossibility of Greek resistance exalted the fury of the barbarians. Some were crucified, others were impaled, cut into pieces, or buried alive ; others, bound to stakes, served as targets to the arrows of the soldiers. Priests were their favourite victims ; they subjected them to special tortures, and then dashed out their brains with clubs studded with nails. When they surprised them in the churches, they compelled them to wear their richest robes, mocked them ; and piercing them with their long spears, exclaimed, in celebration of their victory, " We have now chanted the mass of lances !" The success of the Russians in this expedition was, however, balanced by equivalent reverses. Surrounded and invested, while they were gorged with pillage and murder, they were reached and consumed by the Greek fire. The bolts of heaven seemed to fall upon them.

Igor then turned his arms against the Drevulians, at the request of the chiefs of his army ; that is to say, of the warriors who had followed him in his eastern expedition. These barbarians were men of iron, living by incursions and rapine ; to them fatigue was pleasure, and repose a punishment. The Drevulians were vanquished ; but they were not slow in conspiring for their independ-

ence, and massacred Igor and his companions in an ambuscade. This happened in the year 945. Igor, having left an infant son, named Sviatoslaf, his widow, Olga, took the reins of government. This princess, whom the old chronicles have named Precasna (which signifies 'very beautiful'), showed herself worthy, by the energy of her character, of being the wife of one barbarian hero, and the mother of a second. She avenged on the Drevulians the death of her husband, but her vengeance was atrocious.

Olga desired to embrace Christianity, and travelled to Constantinople to instruct herself in that religion. Constantine Porphyrogenetes then reigned over the old Greek empire. The chroniclers of the period record that he became amorous of Olga, and wished to marry her, although he was sixty years of age; "but this tale," says the historian who relates it, "is sufficiently refuted by Constantine himself:" in fact, that prince, who has left a history of his times, in speaking of the Russian princess, and of the honours she received at his court, states that the empress, his wife, was still living. We will add, that this anecdote proves, as many others prove, that the simplicity and downrightness of the chroniclers of the middle ages is no more proof of their good faith and of the genuineness of their narratives, than of the independence of their writers; and none need boast of having opened their bulky and dusty tomes, unless they read and study them with the precautions of an enlightened criticism.

On embracing Christianity, Olga received the name of Helena. It is thought that her conversion, and her visit to the capital of the Greek empire, were prompted by her desire to consolidate commercial relations, and secure in the future the trade that her subjects had carried on with the beautiful regions of the south. Thus it appears that the political cupidity of Russia is of ancient date.

The conversion of this princess did not confirm the triumph of Christianity in her dominions. She was not imitated by her son, nor by the nobles of her court; and, what is remarkable, those rude barbarians dreaded ridicule, that light venom which seems

only to affect old and polished races: "Do you wish," replied Sviatoslaf to the pious exhortations of his mother, "that my friends should make game of me?"

955. Sviatoslaf, like his father, was a warlike prince, and superior to him in the genius of conquest and devastation. He reigned during twenty-seven years, and during twenty-seven years he had an aggressive sword in his hand. His warlike habits realise the *beau ideal* of barbarism, of that good and precious form of barbarism which adds tenfold to the strength of men; he had no other habitation than the camp, and his troops were never attended by a commissariat. When campaigning, his only food was meat cooked on charcoal, the bare earth was his bed, the saddle of his horse his pillow. Thus lived the heroes of Homer; but Sviatoslaf differed from them in this, that he was often compelled to eat the flesh of horses. By this mode of living, similar to that of the Calmucks, he was enabled, like them, to carry war to a great distance, without embarrassment, and without any inquietude about the subsistence of his army. The same animal which carried the warrior fed him. Sviatoslaf brought under his dominion the southern countries of Europe, comprised between the Tanais and the Borysthenes, the Chersonesus Taurica and Hungary; he took from the Bulgarians all the towns they possessed on the Danube, and contemplated establishing the seat of his empire at Pereslavetz, now Preslav, in Roumelia. "There," said he, "I shall be in the centre of territories. The East will send me its gold and rich stuffs, and Greece its precious wines; Hungary will supply me with war-horses; and I shall still draw honey from Russia, wax, slaves, and fine skins."

The emperor Nicephorus Phocas induced his ally Sviatoslaf to undertake another expedition against the Bulgarians, the eternal enemies of the Greek empire. After a sanguinary battle, the Russians remained masters of the field; but against the faith of treaties, at the instigation of the Prince Calocyros, they appeared

disposed to keep possession of the provinces they had subjected by victory. Sviatoslaf refused to recognise the usurpation of Zimisce, the assassin and successor of Nicephorus Phocas. John Zimisce vainly endeavoured to gain over the Russian prince, whose successes had struck terror into Thrace and Macedonia. "We will never quit so fine a country," fiercely replied the barbarian to the ambassadors of his adversary, "till you have ransomed in hard coin the towns and the prisoners now in our power. Greeks! if you refuse these terms, and will not pay, quit Europe and retire into Asia: you are women; we are men of blood."

It was difficult to avoid war with such insolent enemies, and on both sides it was carried on with fury. The Russians, more audacious than skilful, sunk under the tactics of the Greek generals. The bravest warriors of both nations distinguished themselves by prodigies of valour, and especially by those personal encounters which belong to the first epochs of the history of all peoples: more than one champion, by a single sabre-cut, clove his opponent to the girdle. However, the Russians, who had entrenched themselves in the neighbourhood of Silistria, perceiving that they were hemmed in by the enemy's cavalry, slew themselves with their own swords. "They believe," says Leo the Deacon, "that he who is slain in battle will in the next world be the slave of the man who killed him; therefore they stab themselves when they have no hope of flight or victory, and die persuaded that they will at least preserve their liberty in a future state." We have seen in the Russians of our days the same notions, the same belief, slightly changed or modified after the lapse of eight centuries; a proof how slowly that people advance in civilisation, or rather how little fitted they are for progress.

The Russians fled after their defeat, leaving the banks of the Danube covered with their bucklers and swords, and were obliged to postpone their project of conquering the Greek empire. On returning from this expedition, Sviatoslaf and the small band of his

warriors, survivors of their defeat, were exterminated by the Petcheneguans ; and his skull, ornamented with a golden circlet, served as a drinking-cup to the chief of his conquerors.

The children of Sviatoslaf divided the dominions of their father, and then made war on each other. Kief, Novgorod, and the country of the Drevulians, composed this varied empire. Jaropalk assassinated Oleg ; Vladimir murdered Jaropalk, and thus united in his own hand the different countries subjected by his father. This Vladimir is styled the Great in the history of Russia, and also the Saint, because he is the first sovereign of that empire who adopted and solidly established the Christian faith in his kingdom, an enterprise in which his grandmother Olga failed.

980. Before he embraced Christianity, Saint Vladimir was addicted to the practices of a sanguinary worship, and sacrificed to the god Peroun prisoners of war, children of his own nation, and Christians. The power and fame of this barbarous prince were sufficiently exalted to raise a dispute among the different religions and churches of the world as to which could claim the neophyte for its own : Jews and Mahometans, Greeks and Latins, competed for the honour of his conversion. The victory was gained by the Eastern Church, which owed it to the splendour of its edifices and the pomp of its ceremonial. Vladimir, moved by grace, made war against the Greek empire, but only that he might obtain instruction from the priests and baptism. He might have been converted at less cost ; but to ask as a favour what could be seized by force, was, in the mind of the barbarian, a proceeding unworthy the pride of a warrior. At this epoch the schism of Photius had exploded ; but the schismatical doctrines had not as yet entirely penetrated the Greek Church ; and the patriarch, by whom the first metropolitan of Russia was consecrated, recognised the spiritual supremacy of Rome ; so that the Russians, converted to Christianity, were at first united in communion with the Latins.

On his return from Constantinople, Vladimir, as furious a Christian as he had been a cruel and violent idolater, overthrew

the idols before which he had formerly prostrated himself, and treated with special indignity the terrible god Peroun, his favourite divinity. A wooden statue of Peroun, bound to the tail of a wild horse, was dragged to the Borysthenes ; and during the transit, twelve stalwart soldiers, armed with heavy clubs, inflicted frequent blows on the degraded god, who was afterwards thrown into the river. Peroun unresistingly allowed himself to be drowned at Kief ; but at Novgorod he manifested his indignation by portents and prodigies, for a long time commemorated by certain festivals. However, Vladimir effected this great revolution without encountering that obstinate resistance so common among a people where any religion is deeply rooted or popularised by the charm of its traditions : this indifference is a sufficiently remarkable effect of the narrow intellectual organisation of the men of the north.

The sons of Vladimir engaged in a frightful war. Jaroslaf, who had for his share the town and district of Novgorod, and had revolted against his father, finished by conquering his brothers ; and united to the vast countries which depended on that capital the principalities of Kief, of Rostov, a considerable part of modern Poland, and Lithuania. He also undertook expeditions against the Greek empire, but was unsuccessful. Jaroslaf propagated Christianity throughout his dominions ; and, touched by the fate of his uncles, Jaropalk and Oleg, who had died in the bosom of idolatry, had their bones disinterred, that they might be purified by baptism.

The Pope, wishing to attach Russia to the see of Rome, contrived to establish relations between that country and France, whence resulted a marriage between Henry I., king of France, and the second daughter of Sviatoslaf. Russia, according to the writer who here serves us as a guide, was better known then than it was afterwards, during the long period which preceded the reign of Peter the Great. However, this singular marriage, this unexpected connection between two states so foreign to each other, produces on the page of history an impression difficult to define.

Jaroslaf passes for the first legislator of Russia. By this it must be understood, that he collected, collated, codified, and registered existing laws and customs, sanctioned by time; since we have seen that Russia under Oleg had already legislative institutions, albeit complicated. Jaroslaf, though enlightened beyond his epoch, conformed to the disastrous practice of dismembering the empire by parcelling it out among several competitors equal in birth. He left five sons, who mutually destroyed each other. The anarchy bequeathed by the immediate heirs of the founders was perpetuated by the descendants of the former; and this capital defect in the primitive institution may be considered as the cause which, at a late date, delivered up Russia to the invasions of the Tartars.

The majority of the princes of the first dynasty which held possession of the throne up to the fifteenth century, were cast in one common mould of ferocity and barbarism, peculiar to the locality and the times; and they exhibit scarcely any of the traits of soldier-kings, the parent stock of their race. This remark sufficiently excuses the silence we shall observe on this long aristocratic anarchy, of which each reign only varies from another in the magnitude of its horrors—a bloody uniformity of miseries and catastrophes, in which we only now and then escape from what is revolting, to sink into languor or listlessness. The whole of this epoch, which corresponds among us to the second period of the feudal age, and the commencement of its decline, presents in Russia the perpetual struggle of the elements of a form of feudalism incapable of cohesion and consolidation. Therefore, the outline of the four or five first reigns ought to satisfy all who read and think, without requiring a minute and detailed picture of those monotonous annals. However, for the better conception of the genius and spirit of the interval which spreads over this first epoch, we shall present to our readers a rapid survey of the manners, laws, and arts which obtained during this first period of the Russian annals.

SECOND SECTION OF THE FIRST EPOCH.

STATE OF THE RUSSIAN NATION FROM THE 9TH TO THE 13TH CENTURY.

The document from which we have cited some passages, in speaking of the expeditions of Oleg to the frontiers of the Greek empire, proves that the original form of government established in Russia was the limited supremacy of a military chief, freely elected by his compeers. In this state of things hereditary power had the validity of a fact rather than the virtue of a principle ; and the former alone was sure to transmit power to the descendants of a chief, who, having exercised it with reputation, attached to the interests of his house the greatest number of partisans. Such has been nearly every where, in the north as well as in the south of Europe, the primitive character of royal and military feudalism.

In Russia, however, the throne appears to have been almost always hereditary ; and the unlimited power of disposing of it seems to have often compromised its safety, and to have been the cause which arrested its progress. “ In dividing his empire among his twelve sons, Vladimir the Great,” says an historian, “ retarded the advance of commerce and letters, and diminished the political importance of Russia : the troubles and the wars which resulted from that division replunged the Russians into barbarism, from which they were beginning to emerge.”*

We can readily understand that at this epoch the slavery of the masses only left the name of a nation to an oppressive and savage nobility, barbed in iron ; but, according to M. Levesque,

* Müller.

this in an error, who, in supporting a contrary opinion, appeals to the authority of the celebrated chronicler, the contemporary of Vladimir. “Sviatopalk and Vladimir,” he remarks, “wishing to re-establish order and tranquillity, proposed to hold a congress at Kief. They summoned Oleg to repair thither, that the contested points among the different sovereignties might be adjusted, in presence of the bishops, abbots, the faithful followers of their fathers, and the citizens.”*

This circumstance proves, according to M. Levesque, that simple citizens, together with the nobles and the clergy, were convened to decide upon important affairs, and that in these kinds of parliaments or states-general they had the right of deliberation; the citizens even had the right of assembling, when they thought fit, to discuss public questions. It was at the termination of such a meeting that Isiaslaf was deposed in 1067; and Nestor gives to that assembly the name of *Vetche*, which was the term common among those of the republic of Novgorod. Excess and tumult were the frequent results of these popular assemblies; however, being founded on an acknowledged right, adds our author, they were not considered seditious or criminal. “The princes and boyards took part in the administration. In the old chronicles, the sovereign never assumes or receives pompous titles; if he is recognised by the title of Grand Prince, the boyards have the style of Grand Boyards. All attached to the person of the sovereign were called his *friends*. This name of *friends of the prince* frequently signifies an army, and occasionally the whole people. The soldiers were designated by a name which corresponds to our term child (*otroki*). Domestic servants were not treated as slaves, nor were they pointed out by any humiliating expression,—they were servitors.”

With these remarkable tinges of political liberty, we find in

* The Monk Nestor. “His chronicle, rich in interesting details,” says Müller, “and written with simplicity, proves the extent of his knowledge and the discrimination of his mind.

these barbarous originals certain distinctions among persons, which seem to have been the fruit of a happy instinct of justice. The code of Jaroslaf contains regulations full of wisdom and humanity: some recall the beautiful traditions of the antique legislation of Greece; others resemble the laws which the Romans received from the decemvirs; some, and these are the greatest number, approximate to that code of the Franks called the *Salic* law. But in juxtaposition with these luminous traits of a dawning reason we find other regulations, the extravagance of which astounds us: for instance, to pull a single hair from a man's beard was a graver crime than the cutting off of his finger.*

Jaroslaf enacted laws in favour of merchants and foreigners. Where a native was bound to produce seven witnesses, a foreigner was only required to produce two;—and this favour was great at a time when almost all causes were decided on oral testimony. This foresight of the legislator, by attracting foreigners to Novgorod from all parts, had raised that country to a very high degree of commercial prosperity.

When murder was committed, the father, the son, the brother, the nephew of the dead, could avenge the crime by depriving the criminal of life; but no other could exercise that right; and the penalty of death having been abolished by the sons of Jaroslaf, the law of pecuniary compensation was substituted for the law of retaliation. In the classification of persons, which was one of the consequences of this new legislation, merchants and foreigners held the second rank; thus they immediately followed in rank the first persons in the state.

The composition for the murder of a working man or woman was the same as that imposed for the murder of an administrator of villages belonging to the prince. Industry, therefore, was considered: no such provision is to be found in the ancient laws of the Franks.†

* Müller. *Histoire Universelle*.

(† Levesque.

The life of slaves was not abandoned to the caprice of free men, as was the case among most of the peoples of antiquity. Men bound to the culture of the soil were assimilated to slaves.

Regard was paid to the weaker sex. The composition for the murder of a female slave was heavier than for that of a male slave.

The ordeal of hot bars of iron and of boiling water was ordered against him who brought forward a charge which he could not support by witnesses.

It was permitted to kill a robber caught in the act during night; but if he were detained till morning, it was compulsory to bring him before the tribunal of the prince: if he were slain, and witnesses proved that they had seen him bound and incapable of doing harm, the murderer was compelled to pay a fine.

Usury was at that time so exorbitant, that, by the regulations of the code which restrained the cupidity of lenders, they might still claim an interest of 50 for a capital of 100 borrowed for a year.

The judges were ambulatory. They were fed, lodged, and paid by the inhabitants of the place in which they administered justice. Frequently neither the judge nor the assessor could read; and they made use of tallies to denote the amount of the fine awarded, and the portions of the fine to be at once paid, for it was liquidated gradually in several terms by instalments.

Vladimir, second of the name, modified and augmented the code of Jaroslaf: from this last recasting issued the body of laws which governed the Russians down to the sixteenth century, the epoch at which the czar Ivan Vassilievitch gave them a new system of legislation. In favour of commerce, Vladimir added several rules to those of Jaroslaf. He ordered that a foreign merchant, creditor of a native merchant who became bankrupt, should be first paid in full out of the sale of the goods of the bankrupt. These legislative precautions in favour of foreigners show that Russia required an external impulse to rise above barbarism. In truth, the torch of civilisation has passed from hand to hand, and from people to

people; nations have transmitted and lent their arts; but it is impossible not to recognise the rapidity of some and the slowness of others in their common progress towards social perfectibility. Russia borrowed all from the Greeks from the ninth to the fifteenth century, and from the last date to the eighteenth she was indebted to the Germans and the French; and even in our days, incapable of drawing from herself the elements of moral and social existence, its government barter its pensions and stars against foreign talent and industry. Thus the earliest developments of this people, far from satisfying their wants, seem to have fallen into oblivion. It must be confessed that the child of the north has been less liberally treated by nature than other races, and that civilisation penetrates with difficulty the snows and ice which benumb the human intellect.

The code of Jaroslaf contains one of those laws which bear the antique impress of the beautiful legislation dictated to Greece by its sages: a widow, mother of several children, could punish those who were ungrateful, by depriving them of their inheritance, and bestowing it on those who manifested filial piety.

In Russia, where the trade in slaves was considerable, two different classes of bondsmen were recognised. Slavery was either as absolute as the brute force by which it was established, or limited by virtue of the bargain which created it. Perfect slavery included prisoners of war, or men and women bought of foreigners, and children born to them after the loss of liberty. Slavery by bargain or contract was divided under the following heads:

1. Fathers enjoying freedom could sell their children as slaves; but only by a contract, which fixed the term of slavery either for a number of years, or during the life of the master.

2. Free men sold themselves on the same conditions.

3. Debtors who could not acquit their obligations to their creditors were given up to them as slaves till they had ransomed themselves by their labour. That labour was in the end valued at five roubles (twenty-five francs) for men, and at one-half of that amount for women and girls at the age of puberty.

4. Loans were borrowed on condition of serving the lender till the entire sum was repaid, or to his death.

5. The unfortunate voluntarily became slaves to obtain food from a master.

6. Finally, some became the slaves of a powerful man to secure a protector.

The law did not invest the master with absolute power over a slave, and he could not put him to death. The condition of a slave for a period of years was defined by certain rules; and if those were violated, the contract was at an end.

Usury, which existed at that remote date in its most rapacious form, was one of the most frequent causes of slavery. Vladimir, who was desirous of repressing its excesses, only reduced the legal rate of interest to fifty per cent. In reading this, we are tempted to accuse the old chroniclers of falsehood; for in the earliest periods of society it is difficult to believe in vices which, among all peoples, only characterise their degradation and decline.*

The Christian religion, which began to be established, as we have seen, during the regency of Olga, does not appear to have exercised any considerable influence over the primitive manners of the Russians. Personal slavery of the sternest character, ferocious customs,—in a word, the bloody code of physical force, were not softened by the new doctrine. Moreover, Christianity was compelled to seat itself amidst the inveterate prejudices of ancient idolatry. The worship of false gods was not completely extirpated in a moment. For a long period Russia knew no more of Christianity than baptism, the symbol of faith, and some other practices

* These details relative to the general practice of usury seem confirmed and contradicted at the same time by Müller. “At the end of the thirteenth century,” he says, “silver was so scarce in Russia, that towns ransomed themselves from pillage by the payment of five crowns. Till the fifteenth century the Russians had no coined money; and the alloy of metals was not known before the seventeenth century. The skin of squirrels served as current change. The tribute paid to the khan of Tartary was in animals.”

communicated by the Eastern Church. The people regarded with horror the new religion, abstract in its doctrines, austere in its principles, anti-national in its forms, superseding the ancient Slavonic polytheism, which appealed to the imagination, and which specially flattered the sanguinary passions and warlike instincts transmitted by their ancestors. They regretted Peroun and Svetowid, whose altars streamed with human blood; Koupalo, a more gentle divinity, who presided over the productions of the earth; Lada and Lelia (Venus and Love), Didilia (Lucina), and Domovic Doukhi, domestic spirits, tutelary deities of the fireside, whom the peasants still revere. Finally, they demanded back Roussalki, nymphs of the waters and forests, radiant with youth and beauty, who, unbinding their green hair, sported in the limpid waters, or balanced themselves voluptuously on the flexible branches of trees.

The Slaves or Scandinavians, without being endowed with the rich and brilliant imagination of the people of the south, had nevertheless personified all the physical powers and laws of nature, and attributed the principal events of human life to the superintendence of some deity; but in their religious system, the fierce and terrible prevailed over the soft and consoling affections of the heart. However, the usurpations of the Christian clergy were not less rapid in northern climes than in the more superstitious countries of the south. A rule of ecclesiastical jurisprudence, introduced during the reign of Vladimir, attests the prodigious number of causes over which the Church claimed cognizance from the first moment of its establishment. The immense circle of its jurisdiction embraced the great majority of causes and persons. Some authors have thought that the rule referred to was fictitious, and that it was forged at a later date* by the ambition and cupidity of the Russian clergy. Ecclesiastical history is full of these hypotheses or conjectures. Schismatic or orthodox priests have every where been the same.

The Popes made every effort to retain Russia within the girdle

* Towards the close of the eleventh century.

of the Roman Church ; and for thirty years their influence postponed the adhesion of the Russian Church to the schism of the Greek Church. This religious revolution was completed in the year 1048 by the patriarch Cerularius ; and in 1075 we see Isiaslaf, the first of the name, or Demetrius, despoiled of the sovereignty of Kief, by his brothers sending his son to the Pope to claim the intervention of that chief of the faithful in the western world. The famous Gregory VII., of usurping memory, then wore the tiara, before whom all the kings of Europe lowered their crowns. In a brief addressed to Isiaslaf, he said to him, “ Your son being at Rome to adore the relics of the Apostles, has declared to us that he desires from our hands the sovereignty of Russia, as a gift of the Holy Apostle Peter, on pledging to ourselves the oath of fidelity. He has assured us that you quite agree with him in this step. We have thought it just to accede to his prayer, and give him your dominions, after your death, on behalf of St. Peter.” The Pope wrote also to Bolislas, king of Poland, who had been mixed up with the spoliation of Isiaslaf, enjoining him to restore all that he had taken from Russia, because henceforward it belonged to the Holy See.

We have given an idea of the elements which composed the ancient political system of the Russians ; we must say a word on their relations with the peoples by whom they were surrounded. The majority of those nations were of Tartar or Turkish origin. The first of whom the Russian chroniclers make mention are the Petcheneguans and the Polovtsi. The rivalry of those warlike neighbours long opposed the aggrandisement of the princes of Kief and Novgorod. In one of the incursions of the Petcheneguans, the two armies being about to engage, the leader of the former stepped forward and proposed to Vladimir to settle their disputes by a single combat between two champions ; this was accepted. But the champion of the Petcheneguans was a giant, for whom the Russian prince could not easily find a fitting adversary. At length a young man presented himself ; and, having demanded to exhibit

a public display of his strength before the combat, the young athlete stopped in his rush a vigorous bull, goaded to fury by hot iron. The Petcheneguan Goliath was soon strangled in the muscular arms of his beardless antagonist.

Strength of arm and personal valour, athletic qualities, decided every thing among rude tribes who were only beginning their career, and were ignorant of the numerous devices by which genius and tactics supply the place of muscular energy and neutralise individual courage. Thus duels and the arbitrament of political rivalries by the sword are found in all histories. Traces of these warlike and barbarous customs have for a long period existed among the different peoples of Europe ; the spirit of chivalry revived them, but gave them an exaggerated character and false direction ; and it is known that after the treaty of Madrid, Charles V. and Francis I. challenged each other. It is true they did not fight ; but it is not said that Vladimir and the Prince of the Petcheneguans even thought of personally encountering the hazard of duel.*

The Polovtsi, who dwelt between the Don and the Jaik, struggled longer against the Russians than the Petcheneguans. The name Polovtsi signifies ‘ hunters,’ and sufficiently indicates the nomadic life led by those barbarians, who are referred to the numerous families of the Huns and to the races of Turks, one of the three which divide among them the north of Europe. After having combated against them for two centuries, and sworn to twenty treaties,

* In 1125, Vladimir, second of the name, received the surname of Monomachus or duellist, as related by some authors, not on account of the Greek emperor Constantine Monomachus, his maternal grandfather, but because at the siege of Theodosia (Kaffa) he vanquished in single combat the general of the Genoese, who held that town. “ Having thrown his adversary from his horse,” says a Russian writer, cited by Levesque, “ he led him bound to his camp, and took from him, as token of victory, his cap, enriched with diamonds, his girdle, and the gold chain he wore round his neck.” But Levesque adds two assertions which somewhat impugn the authenticity of the narrative : that Vladimir never made war in the Chersonesus ; and Kaffa did not belong to the Genoese till many years afterwards.

always useless and always violated by the bad faith of the one or the other, the Russians, now suzerains, now tributaries of these indefatigable barbarians, but infinitely superior to them in military science, and always victorious when not disunited, finished by exterminating or reducing them in the course of the thirteenth century. Perhaps, in the incertitude of tradition on that event, it would be more reasonable to admit that the Polovtsi were absorbed by the Mongolians, whose first invasion took place precisely at the epoch of their disappearance.

The Poles, the Lithuanians, the Bulgarians, and Kozarians also engaged for a very long period the activity of the sovereigns of Russia, which, after all, never had more bitter enemies than its own masters, or greater misfortunes than their perpetual discords. It was civil war which almost always drew upon them the scourge of foreign war, and reduced them under the yoke of the Tartars—a yoke terrible and destructive, which for several centuries retarded the progress and civilisation of that vast empire. We have seen that, from the commencement, Russia was divided into several sovereignties. The principal were those of Kief, Novgorod, Vladimir, Rezan, Rostov, Galitch, and Souzdal. The sovereign of Vladimir took the title of grand prince. The republic of Novgorod, almost always hovering between liberty and servitude, and not wishing to be protected, transferred itself to one or the other of those princes, according as it believed its interests would be most respected. But the creation of new principalities, from reign to reign, drew after them new subdivisions; so that every sovereign, from Vladimir, left the empire somewhat feebler than when he had received it. Thus parcelled out by the radical vice of an hereditary right, without restraint and without foresight, which assimilated the property of a vast monarchy to the landed estate of a private gentleman, Russia was also wasted by superstition. The Church sucked up the larger portion of the nourishing juices of the State. Pious dotations, multiplied by the insensate liberality of princes, had granted to the clergy tithes on all objects. Andrew,

sovereign of Novgorod, founded a church, called from its wealth the "Heap of Gold." Vsevolod, following his example, built one in honour of the sainted martyr Demetrius, to which he gave, as endowments, villages, forests abounding in honey, lakes and rivers, without counting the general tenths and other tributes. Manners then united the ferocity of the camp to the bigotry of the cloister. In 1198 we see the Prince of Smolensko assuming the religious habit, and receiving the monkish tonsure on his death-bed. Many others after him imitated this act of superstition, which was binding through life on all who recovered their health. Under such princes the audacity of the priests and monks knew no bounds. The chronicle of Nikon furnishes a striking example in the history of a bishop of Rostov, named Phedor. This man joined impiety to wickedness, and shrunk from no cruelty to gratify his insatiable avarice. The authority of a bishop must have been very extraordinary at that time; for Phedor inflicted the most excruciating tortures to plunder the rich of their treasures, and even princes and boyards became the victims of his cruelty. Of some, he burnt the skin of the head; of others, the eyes; he cut off the nose, lips, and ears of many, or their feet and hands; others had their bones broken between planks; even women were tortured by his orders. This barbarian, who was of prodigious strength, after having pronounced sentence, often performed the duties of executioner. To the arms of tyranny he united those of the Church, interdicts and anathemas. The prince, forced by public indignation to put an end to these atrocities, summoned up courage to arrest the monster; but he did not dare to judge him in person, fearful of usurping the rights of the altar. He sent him to the metropolitan of Kief. Interrogated about his crimes, the horrible Phedor only replied by blasphemies. The metropolitan, basing his sentence on the laws of Moses against blasphemers, ordered him to be thrown into the Dneiper with a stone hung round his neck.*

It may appear astonishing that such wicked priests should

* This account is textually extracted from Levesque.

have existed among a people so recently converted, and when the new maxims should have lost none of their primitive force ; but it must be remarked, that this young Christianity of the Russians was the offspring of an old religion, and that it came from the Greek Church, then torn asunder and dishonoured by schisms, as the Latin Church afterwards was soiled by scandals. From this impure source nothing could flow but forms without faith.* Death cannot communicate life ; and the Russo-Greek clergy, secretly reprobated from distant times, long remained abject and degraded. In Russia distinction never was obtained in the clerical profession, except by a few richly-endowed bishops.

The princes regarded the wishes of the priests as the decrees of heaven ; and if they sometimes nominated to vacant sees, those nominations did not recognise any real or absolute prerogative in the crown, since it was necessary that the metropolitan should confirm the election to give it validity, and it was his privilege to consecrate the bishop. It must be admitted that the middle ages were every where the golden age of episcopacy ; and that the barbarians who pulverised ancient civilisation, both in the north and in the south, became to the shepherds of the Church a flock with the richest fleeces cupidity could desire.

Constant intercourse with Greece had introduced into Russia that taste for art and luxury which always precedes, even at a long distance, the substantial advantages of civilisation. From the time of Vladimir, Greek architects built palaces at Kief and Volodimir, and Greek artists decorated the interiors. In the eleventh century, and under that Isiaslaf of whom we have spo-

* Since Russia had embraced Christianity, its metropolitans were always consecrated by the Patriarchs of Constantinople. In 1147, for the first time, the Russian bishops elected a monk of their own nation, named Clement, who was their fourteenth metropolitan. This nomination, founded on the fact that the patriarchal see of Constantinople was vacant, was nevertheless contested, and occasioned a schism which troubled the Russian church for many years.

ken, that luxury had made such progress, that the chroniclers of neighbouring nations denounced it as having exercised a pernicious influence on ancient manners. One of them remarks that Boleslas, king of Poland, having remained during several years with his army in Russia, brought back his troops to their native country enervated by the seeds of corruption. That opulent country, said they, steeped in pleasures, relaxed in energy, and destroyed by its commerce with the Greeks, proved no less fatal to the Polish warriors than did the voluptuous Capua to the soldiers of Hannibal.

At the same epoch, Isiaslaf, soliciting the assistance of the Emperor of Germany, sent him presents of gold, silver, and most precious stuffs; and this magnificence, unknown in Germany, filled the court of Henry IV. with astonishment.

Not only had the Russians derived considerable treasure from Greece by trade, but they had also enriched themselves by the spoils of many barbarous peoples whom they had conquered, and who were loaded with immense booty pillaged from the East.

Such was the state of Russia, when a formidable people, whose approach was heralded by the rumour of immense successes, moving towards the north, because there was nothing more to subdue in the south, advanced, to replunge into the darkness of slavery, and throw back in the eyes of Europe, the empire founded by Rourik.

SECOND EPOCH.

INVASION BY THE SONS OF GENGIS KHAN, AND DOMINION OF THE MONGOLS.

1223. BEFORE speaking of the arrival of the Tatars and of the establishment of their rule in Russia, we must say a word on the origin of this devastating people. From time immemorial, three principal races divided among them the vast territories which separate Siberia from India and China ; these nomadic races were, the Turcomans, the Calmucks or Mongols, and the Mantchou. The Turcomans had conquered Western Asia and a part of Europe ; the Mongols had seized Asia ; the Mantchou reigned in China. These last, very susceptible of civilisation, full of courage, tact, and love of liberty, have a common origin with the Tongosians, a people of hunters, hating repose, who extended their incursions from the frontiers of China to Jenissei.

In remote antiquity the Calmucks bore the still more barbarous name of Hiongnou : under that name they had destroyed the throne of the Chinese emperors of the Han dynasty from the date of the times of Hannibal. At the fifth century they reappeared under that of Huns (which was transmuted into Hongres, and even into Ogres), when, after having made Europe tremble from the banks of the Volga to those of the Rhine, they ultimately fixed themselves in ancient Pannonia. The habits of those people and their mode of making war would have enabled them to subject the world, had they known how to preserve their primitive character and discipline. The Calmucks had scarcely any beard, their eyes were small and sunk, the nose flat, shoulders broad, their frame robust ; although short in stature, they possessed

great muscular strength, and their features were strongly marked. Such were the Huns. Their black countenances, covered with incisions after the manner of savages, resembled a mass of formless flesh. In common with the Calmucks, they delighted in the rich pastures of Berotala, in central Asia, where the plants and the springs are impregnated with salt.*

In the thirteenth century a revolution burst forth in that ancient country of the Hiongaou or Huns, which changed the face of Asia, and overthrew several European empires. Jehangir Bahadar, khan of the Mongols or Moghuls, who reigned on the banks of the Selinga, died, leaving a son, thirteen years of age, who was called Temudshin. The Mongols refused to acknowledge this son as their master; thirteen tribes alone remained faithful to him. Arrived at the age of adolescence, the young Temudshin displayed great talent and rare intrepidity. He sought for war and combats, and was always victorious. More eager for glory than wealth, he distributed the spoils of conquered enemies among his companions in arms, whom he treated as brothers, and knew how to make himself respected and beloved by all who approached his person. He had acquired a great reputation when the Mongols, about the year 600 of the Hegira, assembled on the banks of the Selinga to select a chief. In the midst of their assembly, one of their sages, venerable by his age and virtues, rose and said: "My brethren, the great God of heaven has appeared to me in a vision, seated on a throne of fire, surrounded by celestial intelligences, and judging all the nations of the earth: I heard him give the empire of the world to our prince Temudshin, and proclaim him king of kings (Gengis Khan)." At these words all the Mongols raised their hands to heaven, and swore to follow Temudshin (Gengis Khan) in all his enterprises.

Gengis Khan, proud of his new title, and persuaded that nothing could resist him, formed the gigantic project of traversing the whole earth as a conqueror, and of only granting peace to the

* Müller; Deguignes.

vanquished. He issued forth from his wild deserts, burst upon China, defeated its princes of the dynasty of Sun, seized their capital Nankin and the peninsula of Corea. He then marched to the west, subjected Thibet, penetrated into Cashmere, and menaced the states of the powerful sultan of Khorassan, Ala-Eddin-Mohammed, son of Takash, who had overturned the empire of the Ghebers, and ruled over Persia and a great part of Hindostan. This prince marched against Gengis Khan with 400,000 men; he was defeated, and his country subjugated. His valiant son Gelaleddid Mankbarn wandered for a long time from adventure to adventure, from India to the Tigris, and perished after undergoing much hardship and misfortune. The countries which border the Caspian Sea were next rapidly invaded by Gengis Khan; the Polovtsi and the Alani, ancient enemies of Russia, were divided and crushed. The czar of Russia advanced at the head of his warriors to stop the progress of the lieutenants of the redoubtable khan of the Mongols, and was put to flight. After having filled Asia with the terror and glory of his name, Gengis Khan died at the age of sixty-four.

Chein-Noian and Soudu-Bahadar, lieutenants of Gengis Khan, after their victory on the banks of the Kalka and the capture of Kief, rushed into the different principalities of Russia. The people, accustomed to walk out of their towns to meet their princes with the cross and images, thought they could disarm the conquerors by the same marks of respect and submission; but the Tartars, who worshipped other gods, massacred the Christian populations while mocking their simplicity. They then entered Novgorod-Severski, in Little Russia, to the north-east of Tchernigof; and then turning to the south, and at last fatigued with success and carnage, they went to Gengis Khan, who was at Bokhara. That prince, astonished at the immense number of prisoners, publicly lavished upon them the most flattering honours, and loaded them with his favours.

1228. After this invasion, the Russians, giving themselves up

to the furies of civil war, prepared another by exterminating themselves. Cowardly against foreigners, they were courageous against their country. The inhabitants of Pleskof alone opposed to this general madness a language and a conduct the wisdom of which excites more than surprise, as it shines forth brilliantly in the midst of the darkness of barbarism. Jaroslaf, prince of Novgorod, demanded their assistance against the town of Riga, recently founded, and which he desired to attack and destroy. Those generous citizens thus replied to the prince: "You are prudent; you know that all men are brothers; Christians and infidels are all of the same family. We ought not to make war on those who do not partake of our faith, nor take upon ourselves to punish their errors; it is much wiser to live in peace with them; then they will cherish our gentleness and virtues, they will be touched by them and conceive a friendship for us, and from loving us they will embrace our religion."

It was in the thirteenth century that the Russians held this language; and it is a monk, the patriarch Nikon, who has transmitted this language to us. But the superior reason which dictated those beautiful sentiments was too far in advance of the times and of the country to be generally understood. The Russians continued to tear themselves to pieces with their own hands; and Bati, one of the sons of Gengis, having passed the Kama, and afterwards subjugated the Bulgarians, advanced to the Don, at the head of 600,000 men, pouring them into those unhappy countries, whose princes were still blindly arraying the inhabitants against each other. This second invasion was no less victorious than the former. Moscow, Volodimir, and Tojok fell. The Tatars massacred, burnt, destroyed all they met on their passage; and once more returned to their deserts, without drawing any solid fruits from their conquests.

1238. They appeared again in the following year, and seized Pereislaf and Tchernigof. In 1248 Mangou Khan was sent by Bati to make an attempt on Kief, where Michael reigned. That

cowardly prince fled into Hungary, after having caused the deputies of Mangou to be assassinated. Bati, indignant, went in person to besiege the town. In spite of the bravery of the *namesnik* Dmitri, who defended it, the place was taken, and the barbarians filled it with dead bodies and desolation. Bati then turned his arms against Poland and Hungary.

The peoples whom the sovereigns of Russia had subjugated, and those who saw their aggrandisement with inquietude, profited by their exhaustion to attack them. The Lithuanians fell upon Smolensko. The Knights Sword-bearers, possessors of the ancient country of the Teutons, named Tchoude in the old Russian chronicles, and now constituting Livonia and Esthonia, leagued themselves with Sweden and Denmark to strip from them what the Tatars had spared.* They were completely defeated on the banks of the Neva by Alexander, prince of Novgorod, to whom this victory, which had been preceded by many other successes, gave the surname of Newski. This valiant prince repulsed them a second time two years afterwards (1242).

1243. After three years of incursions in Hungary and Poland, Bati returned to the Kaptchak. He insisted that Jaroslaf, grand prince of Volodimir, should do him homage before his horde. The latter resigned himself to this degradation, and took the journey

* Towards the middle of the twelfth century some merchants of Bremen were wrecked by a tempest at the mouth of the Dwina. At first treated as enemies, they ultimately succeeded in conciliating the inhabitants, and traded with them. The profits realised attracted other merchants of the same nation, who formed some small establishments on the banks of the Dwina; other German families followed their example. An Augustine monk made some converts, and founded a religious house belonging to his order. It was the practice at that time to extend and strengthen Christianity by force of arms: a militia of knights was instituted to propagate the faith in those countries; and at length that militia was incorporated with the Teutonic order. These armed apostles, devout and sanguinary at the same time, became masters of the country; and the ancient inhabitants, having embraced Christianity, but deprived of their lands, and loaded with chains, were no more than the slaves of these tyrants, sworn to defend the cross. LEVESQUE.

with Constantine, one of his sons. The khan, satisfied with his submission, loaded him with honours, and recognised him as the principal sovereign of Russia. But although Bati exercised undisputed authority over the countries subjected to his sway, he recognised the supremacy of Oktai, son and heir of Gengis; and required Jaroslaf to send his son Constantine to the great horde of the Mongols. Oktai, chief of the great horde, being dead, and Kaiouk, the eldest of his sons, having succeeded him, Jaroslaf was ordered by Bati to repair to the new sovereign and make his submission. (1246.) That prince, forced to obey, died on his return to his native land. From the date of these manifest acts of vassalage, no Russian prince, till the time of Ivan, the third of that name, durst take possession of a principality without having paid homage to the khan as his suzerain. It is said that they took the oath of fidelity to the Tatar on their knees, and in terms which would have disgusted all who had the slightest feeling of the dignity of human nature from reigning on such abject terms. This dominion of the Mongols, established, as we have seen, at the commencement of the thirteenth century, only terminated about the middle of the fifteenth; it endured therefore for nearly three centuries, too long a period of shame and misery, during which we see princes without nobleness or courage pursue with the ferocity of eagerness a degraded power, and appeal in turn to the intervention of the khan of the Mongols, a greedy and scornful arbitrator, who sported with the ambition and feebleness of all.

1260-1320. The Tatars, conquerors of Asia, united when they had to conquer, were divided when they came to share the spoil. The grandsons of Gengis dismembered his vast inheritance; and Nogai, one of the most famous generals of the khan of Kaptchak, having revolted, carved out a principality for himself on the northern coast of the Black Sea, whose inhabitants have retained his name.

1300-1362. Dmitri Ivanovitch, surnamed Donski, who ascended the throne in 1362, was the first who refused the accus-

tomed tribute to the khan of Kaptchak. Twenty years were occupied in reciprocal incursions into the territories of each other by Russians and Tatars. Finally, the latter, to regain possession of their ancient rights, advanced to the Voroneje at the point where it flows into the Don, under the command of Mamai, the grand khan, to the number of 700,000 men. (1380.) Dmitri also crossed the Don at the head of 400,000 troops; and to compel his soldiers to conquer or die, he broke down the bridges. Mamai was beaten, and fled with the panic-stricken remnant of his army. But new hordes of Tatars were not slow in appearing in the districts covered with the bones of their predecessors. (1382.) They devastated Moscow and massacred the inhabitants; and Dmitri, abandoned through the cowardice of other princes, saw his country ravaged, without being able to defend it or avenge its wrongs. This just, brave, and generous sovereign was surnamed Donski on account of his victory on the Don. He died young, and passed rapidly away from his epoch and his barbarous country, like a hero of another age, another climate, and another state of society. Such, and no less remarkable, had been that Alexander Newski whom Russia had canonised, and who merited much better than Vladimir the honour of a Christian apotheosis. Thus among peoples the least worthy of great men, and in countries least fertile in fine and noble examples, some glimmerings of magnanimity and reason attest from time to time that character of moral and intellectual superiority, the existence of which poor humanity is tempted to doubt when contemplating the protracted exhibition of misery and crime.

Vassili the Second, Dmitriewitsch, eldest son of Dmitri Donski, followed the centralising policy of his father, in attempting to regain the different principalities of Russia, and unite them under his sceptre. The opportunity was favourable for the accomplishment of his design. Timour Bek, or Tamerlane, another predestined devastator, appeared in Asia, and his attacks destroyed the empire of the descendants of Gengis Khan. This conqueror advanced to

the territory of Voroneje, and appeared to meditate a descent on Moscow. Terror spread in all directions; the destruction of the grand prince appeared imminent. God suddenly changed the thoughts of Timour, who, contrary to all expectation, retraced his steps; but he had struck a mortal blow at the horde of Kaptchak, which from that time became more and more enfeebled. Vassili struggled against the khan with varied fortune; his last exploit was the capture and destruction of the town of Kasan, which was under the rule of the Kaptchaks. He did not die till long after that victory. (1396.) However, the suzerainty of the khans had existed; and we see the successor of that prince, Vassili the Third, driven from the throne by a more fortunate competitor, implore the protection of the Tatar chief. As to the tribute formerly imposed by the lieutenants of Gengis, the Russians paid it when they were weak, and refused it when they were strong. Its amount varied according to the same alternatives; but we must say a word on its nature, and on the singular mode in which it was discharged.

For want of gold and silver money, not yet known to the Russians, they employed other representative signs. The first was the skin of the marten (*kouna*), which was not the sable of Siberia, that country not being yet discovered. There were twenty kounas, or skins of martens, in the grifna.*

The vekokhe, another kind of money, was made out of the skin of squirrels: there were twenty of these to each kouna, or skin of a marten. It seems also that four rezans made one vekokhe. This word is derived from *rezat*, "to cut," and appears to be the fourth part of a skin. Ears and half-ears served for petty cash. The fourth part of a copeck, the Russian halfpenny, is still called polouchko, or half-ear. They also used the lobki, which was skin from the forehead of a squirrel; and the mordki, which was taken from the nose of the marten.

The inconveniences of this kind of money, which depreciated

* The nature of this symbolic money will be explained in the chapter on "Russian Trade." J. D.

through wear and tear in circulation, so as in time to lose all its value, compelled the Russians to replace it, towards the end of the fourteenth century, by pieces of leather stamped with a certain sign. However, the most interesting remark to be made on this practice, apparently so singular, is, that it was derived from the nature of then existing property, which, among all peoples, has at their origin formed the principal and indeed sole source of wealth, that is to say, flocks and herds. Southern nations used domestic living animals as instruments of exchange ; the northern nations, skins and wild beasts.

Delivered from Timour, Vassili Dmitriewitsch made war on Vitold, prince of Lithuania, who had seized Smolensko. The hope of destroying both by their attacks on each other induced Boulou Sultan, who reigned over the Tatars, to intervene in the quarrel between those princes ; and the principality of Twer, with the city of Moscow, had to suffer new incursions, always devastating. (1409.) A signal victory over the Tatars of Kasan, and the complete ruin of that town, signalised the last years of the reign of Vassili the Second, who died in 1425.

External wars, civil wars, domestic outrages, treasons, frightful reverses, and sudden returns to power, marked the reign of Vassili the Third. His uncle Joury, or George, at first disputed his right to the throne. The two pretenders agreed to refer their claims to the horde, that is, to the court of the Tatar prince. Vassili gained the day, and the Khan Oulou Mahmet even exempted him from all tribute. Joury appealed to force, and marched against his rival with an army. Vassili, conquered and shut up in Kostroma, could not defend himself. However, his uncle using his victory more nobly than might have been expected from so ambitious a man, gave him the town of Kolomna. The greater part of the nobles espoused the part of the re-established prince, and hostilities recommenced between the uncle and the nephew. Joury died ; Vassili continued the war against his cousins, made them prisoners, and put out their eyes. This prince, so cruel to

his relations, was ungrateful to the Khan Oulou Mahmet, his benefactor. That Tatar, conquered and pursued by another khan, vainly demanded an asylum from him. This baseness was avenged. 3000 Tatars broke through and dispersed 40,000 Russians; and returning to the Volga, they rebuilt Kasan, which afterwards became the seat of a formidable power, against which Russia had long to struggle (1438).

1441. Three years afterwards the unappeased indignation of Oulou Mahmet brought him back to the territory of Moscow, fire and sword in hand. In 1445 Vassili himself fell into the power of this khan of the Tatars; and we witness with astonishment in a barbarian a generosity which we should admire even in an enlightened man. Disarmed by the misfortune of the prince, formerly his guest, now his enemy, Oulou Mahmet sent him away, only exacting a ransom, the amount of which he allowed Russia to fix. But fortune was more severe to Vassili when he reached his dominions. Surprised by one of the sons of Joury, the only one who had escaped from his vengeance, he also had his own eyes put out: it was the punishment he had inflicted on the brothers of his competitor; and he was banished at the moment when he expected to remount the throne. He did ascend it at a later period. His adversary Chemiaka, abandoned by victory, was compelled to seek an asylum among the Novgorodians. Vassili III. died in 1462, lamented by his subjects, who had always loved him; from which it may be inferred that the administration of that prince was wiser than his politics.

Such are the sad vicissitudes which, during this unhappy period, happened to the descendants of Rourik, who held a royalty subject to foreign tribute, and who displayed rude passions rarely elevated by greatness of soul. But a new era commences with the reign of Ivan III. That civilisation, whose antique source flowed from the East, is about to receive a powerful impulse, after having had its progress suspended during three centuries. Russia, forgotten by Europe, and up to this time a prey to the brigandage

of savage hordes, which it was destined to subjugate, is preparing to enter upon the stage of the European world ; for it must not be believed that those vast regions were not enlightened by the torch of reason, or did not receive the first benefits of art and science till the accession of Peter the Great. A man of the vulgarest mind, even in an age of ignorance and darkness, might conceive of industrial improvements ; but the birth of regular civilisation, the sudden transformation of a people, is not within the power of any mortal, and social organisation is not struck out at a heat. No doubt, great men aid a nation to emerge from chaos, nevertheless the cause of all they create existed before them ; before them, an invisible hand, a celestial will had prepared the soil into which fortunate cultivators cast seed. It is an error springing from the love of the marvellous, which creates a Hercules in politics, as it creates a Hercules in fable. Would it not be a more easy and simple mode of gratifying this love for the marvellous, humbly to recognise the design of that Providence, in itself so marvellous, which draws the remnant of an unknown people from beneath the Tatar tents, to place it, at the end of four centuries, at the head of a holy alliance of kings, and which now subjects trembling Europe from the Neva to the rock of Gibraltar ! Thus in the solemn and mysterious march of nations, each in its turn enjoys for an instant the honour of imposing its laws on the rest of the universe : but this avowal costs nothing to those who regard the revolutions of the world from the summits of history ; and the wounds of national pride may be healed by the lessons of a superior philosophy.

THIRD EPOCH.

RUSSIA SHAKES OFF THE YOKE OF THE TATARS — DESTRUCTION OF PARTICULAR SOVEREIGNTIES AND RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EMPIRE BY IVAN THE THIRD VASSILIEVITSCH, SURNAMED THE GREAT, AND BY IVAN THE FOURTH VASSILIEVITSCH, HIS GRANDSON. FROM 1462 TO 1584.

THAT secret force of aggregation which forms great empires and re-establishes them had commenced its reaction in the heart of Russia, when Ivan the Third Vassilievitsch mounted the throne, endowed with the intelligence and vigour necessary to profit by the movement. The larger portion of the principalities constructed out of the dismembered empire of Rourik had fallen into the hands of the heirs of his house, either by conquest, fraud, the efflux of time, or those various circumstances and contingencies which had exhausted or extinguished the families to which the principalities had been assigned. Such had been the fate of the towns of Souzdal and of Nischegorod under the grandfather and father of Ivan the Third; and such was during his reign the destiny of Pleskoff, a free commercial town, as were Novgorod, Twer, Tchernigoff, Severesk, and Riesan. This movement, which levelled the ground for a single and despotic throne, gradually descended from the princes wielding an independent sovereignty to the vassals of the grand prince, and under Ivan the Fourth reached the nobles who formed the secondary class of aristocracy. From the fourteenth to the fifteenth century, Russia indeed experienced a revolution similar to that which at the same epoch changed the face of all the other states of Christendom.

This advance of political society, in associating Russia with the destinies of Europe, perhaps more powerfully prevented it becoming wholly Asiatic than its religion, a weak and tardily planted faith, too much counterbalanced in its influence by the manners of the country.

However, succession to the throne by the law of primogeniture was saved, and, what is singular, fortified in the midst of all these revolutions. Finally the Tatars, worn out by intestine divisions, and having thrown to the south the greater portion of their conquering hordes, no longer excited terror or threatened imminent danger. Superiorly organised to overrun and devastate the world, those people were little fitted to found a durable power. The soil of China, trampled under foot and conquered by them, neutralised their warlike virtues, and they received from manners and peace that yoke which they had imposed by war and violence.

Reflecting on the circumstances by which he was surrounded, Ivan foresaw his future greatness. By acquiring glory against external enemies, he felt that he should rise superior to those independent princes who still held the vast heritage of Rourik ; and he began his policy with the Tatars. According to some authors,* he did not dare till 1477 to refuse to the khan of Kaptchak the tribute paid by his predecessors ; but it is abundantly proved, that immediately on his succession to the throne in 1465, he commenced an exterminating war against them. After eight years of suffering and defeat, the Khan Ibrahim solicited peace from the grand prince. At the same epoch, 1470, disturbances excited at Novgorod by the ambition and love of a woman, furnished Ivan with the opportunity of crushing with advantage to himself the ancient liberty of this republic of traders. This woman, named Marpha, fascinated by a Lithuanian nobleman, desired her country to pass under the yoke of Poland ; and to humour her lover, this frivolous audacity hastened the ruin of her native land. Sub-

* Eichhorn ; Spitzler.

jected, Novgorod the Great lost day by day some of its territory, its population, its commerce, and its wealth. Its subjugation by the grand prince was completed in 1475.

1475. In the same year, Akhmet, khan of the Gilded Horde, sent deputies to the grand prince, ordering him to pay tribute. The answer of Ivan was to put the ambassadors to death, excepting one, whom he reserved as a messenger to the khan, announcing that the period of servitude was passed. From 1475 to 1480 the khan made vain efforts to seize the end of the chain which the courage of Ivan had broken ; but all his incursions failed. An alliance with Casimir the Fourth, king of Poland, and with the two brothers of Ivan, Andrew and Boris, did not bring victory to his arms in his contest with a prince who not only had talents for war, but the genius necessary for consolidating empire. It is scarcely necessary to say that this war was waged with frightful atrocities against the ancient oppressors of Russia : women, children, and old men were butchered.

The Nogais horde, enemies of the Gilded Horde, entering into their territory while they were engaged with Ivan, exterminated all who had escaped from the sword of the Russians, and annihilated an empire which had lived under tents since 1257.

The success of the grand prince kindled hatred and excited conspiracies against his life. The Prince Loukamtki, the instrument of one of those plots, instigated by Casimir the Fourth, king of Poland, and who proposed to poison Ivan, was betrayed, and burnt in an iron cage. After that event, Poland waged an unsuccessful war against Russia. In the north of the empire the Knights Sword-bearers were beaten and humiliated. Finally, Michael, prince of Twer and son-in-law of Ivan, having offended his father-in-law, and sought the friendship of the king of Poland, had all his territories seized and annexed to those of the grand prince two or three years after his revolt.

1486. The horde of Kasan, having recruited its strength, reappeared in a menacing attitude. Ivan marched, conquered,

and invested with the shadow of royalty the brother of the prince whom he had dethroned. Expelled by his subjects, again recovering his throne, this khan massacred in a single day all the Russian merchants found within his dominions, summoned the Nogais to his aid, and advancing into the Russian territories, perpetrated those frightful devastations so familiar to the people he commanded. But arrived under the walls of Nijni-Novgorod, the Nogais horde and the horde of Kasan came to blows, and the term of their co-operation was the term of their success; thus all the enemies as well as all the neighbours of Ivan experienced the effects of his ambition or of his good fortune.

The poverty of the peoples who dwelt on the shores of the Arctic Sea did not protect them from the ambition of Ivan. The Vogolues, now miserable and contemptible, were then courageous brigands, whose incursions infested the banks of the Kama, or Permian, a country which derives its name from ancient Biarmia. The Ogres or Igourians, inhabitants of the mountains which define the limits of Siberia, were also subjugated. They were probably the same people, issuing from caves at the end of the ninth century, who settled in ancient Pannonia, and gave it their name. Vestiges of their language are still traceable in Hungary.

“The Ogres or Igourians are the first people of the Turkish race who cultivated the sciences; and it is they who communicated them, as well as the art of writing, to the other nations of the same family, and probably to most nations. Perhaps we are indebted to them for astronomical observations, which, made under a more northern climate than that of the ancient peoples who have transmitted them, cannot be the result of their researches. These prove that, in very remote ages, the north contained a learned nation, whose memory is lost to us, though we enjoy the benefit of their intelligence. Thus that nation which we suppose extinct,—that nation to which we owe so much gratitude, now degenerate, barbarous, despised, unknown,—still perhaps occupies a

large portion of the globe; a terrible revolution, that the most flourishing peoples may experience in their turn.”*

At the end of the reign of Ivan III., Russia had begun to attract the attention and interest of Europe. The astonished Muscovites saw within their walls the ambassadors of the emperor of Germany, of the Pope, and of the Republic of Venice, of Poland, and of Denmark. Ivan signed treaties of peace and alliance with those princes. The arts, reviving in Italy, penetrated the ice of the north as a consequence of these friendly relations; and traversing from Greece the countries of the west, they discovered in the north vestiges of a civilisation which had flowed from the same source. Italian artists and workmen, architects, jewellers, founders of cannon, engineers, were invited to this distant transplantation by prodigal rewards. Then the capital of Russia was embellished; and the grand princes, who from this time assumed the title of Grand Dukes, began to sleep under ceilings, unknown to their rude ancestors. The double-headed black eagle did not replace the St. George on horseback, which had been the armorial type of the sovereigns of Kief and Volodimir, till the reign of Ivan Vassilievitch IV. The St. George on horseback is still found on several coins.

Vassili, the fourth Ivanovitch, followed the prosperous career of his father against the Tatars of Kasan and against Poland, then governed by Sigismund, from whom he took the town of Smolensko. From 1505, the epoch at which he ascended the throne, to 1534, he consolidated, at the cost of sanguinary sacrifices, that

* I have borrowed this passage textually from Levesque, as it contains reflections so philosophical and interesting; but as to the opinion which he espouses of the high antiquity and ancient civilisation of the Ogres or Igourians, and which rests on the authority of M. Deguignes, I must remark, that it is combated by M. Depping, one of his most learned annotators, who, in his turn, cites the more imposing authority of M. Klaproth (see *History of Russia*, vol. ii. p. 348). However, it seems little probable, reasoning on generally received data, that knowledge and civilisation should have dawned in the north before it shone in the south.

grand restoration destined to be achieved by the hands of a prince whose career history is bound to record in its most deeply engraved pages.

IVAN, THE FOURTH VASSILIEVITSCH,

FIRST CZAR,

SURNAMED BY THE RUSSIANS THE "TERRIBLE," AND BY FOREIGNERS THE
"TYRANT."

The extreme youth of the children of Vassili III. delivered up Russia to all the troubles and misfortunes which usually attend a regency. Helena, mother of the young princes, governing by her favourites, opened a wide door to the discontent and ambition of a restless nobility. That princess, addicted to gallantry and yet of a cruel disposition, put out the eyes of her uncle, whose remonstrances had offended her. She then died, leaving a son seven years of age, surrounded by the factious, the corrupted, and the hostile. While the prince was too young to make himself respected, nothing was seen among the nobles but usurpations, plots, and anarchical rivalries. An invasion by the khan of the Crimea scarcely united them in defence of their country. Happily, that weakness of infancy which they insulted in their future master ceased sooner with Ivan than with most other men. He was scarcely fourteen years of age when he stretched over the heads of his subjects both the sceptre of a king and the claws of a tiger; for there were two distinct beings in this prince, the great man and the wild beast. Let us at first speak of the former; there will be space enough remaining to make known the other.

Since the period when Russia had regained its rank as an independent nation, the Tatars habitually sold their swords to that power among the enemies of Russia who paid them most, and sometimes they became the stipendiaries of the great princes against Poland. In consequence of this system, they had been

during the two preceding reigns alternately the friends or foes of Russia. The Tatars of the Crimea, not less fickle and vacillating, ceased to recognise the suzerainty of Russia after the death of the khan Mili Guery, who had sworn strict fidelity to Vassili IV. It was necessary to subjugate them a second time. More than one campaign, more than one victory were required for their reduction; although they had so far degenerated from their ancient valour, that their khans themselves had lost the courage of the sons of Gengis. One of them, Chikh-Alei, released from the prison in which he had languished, went to Moscow during the regency of Helena, and striking his forehead against the earth, begged pardon of the young prince and his mother for the rebellion which had caused him the loss of his liberty. When Ivan, thanks to a formidable artillery, had destroyed the ramparts of Kasan, the last asylum of Tatar rule, and exterminated the immense population of the town, he turned towards the boyards who surrounded him, and said, "At last God has fortified me against you." (1552.)

Since 1545 Ivan had established the militia of the Strelitz, afterwards so famous. Before the organisation of that standing army, regular troops were unknown in Russia. The nobles were obliged to serve. The chief among them, under the name of Voivodes, discharged the duties of general officers; or, under the title of Golovy, held a rank corresponding to that of colonel; all the rest were rank and file. The richest served at their own cost; others received a small pay and fiefs named *Pomestie*. The lowest grades of nobility were the *Dvoriane gorodskie*, or nobles of towns; and the *Dieti boiarskie*, or young boyards, so called because they served during a campaign under the orders of the boyards, as sons receive orders from their fathers: their rank was inferior to that of the young nobility. The possessors of fiefs were followed by their peasantry, badly clothed, badly armed, and altogether undisciplined. Each noble was obliged to bring with him a number of foot and horse proportioned to his fortune estimated in land. Cultivators, inhabitants of towns, and especially

traders, only served on extreme occasions ; but when the state was pressed by imminent danger, they also took arms, and even the church furnished men and horses. These usages were for a long time common to all Europe. Ordinarily the nobles alone constituted the strength of the army ; they fought on horseback.*

It was the voivode, or governor of each town, who levied the contingent of troops the town had to furnish.† They were composed of men not regularly enlisted, who were engaged in various pursuits, and could not remain long under the banner. All these men, assembled in haste, armed themselves as they pleased ; they only knew how to strike blows, but had no knowledge of the art military. The defects of such an army are obvious. Ivan saw and wished to correct them. With that design he formed the militia of the Strelitz, more correctly called the Streli.‡ He drilled them, subjected them to military discipline, and substituted the musket for the bow, which till then had been the favourite weapon of the Russians. Such was the first epoch of the organisation of regular troops in Russia ; and at the same time it may be considered as the period from which the increase of its power abroad, and its encroachments on monarchical power within, may be dated. We shall soon see this power, disfigured in its principle and even in its form, present the spectacle—sufficiently frequent elsewhere in history, but nowhere so marked,—of a nation losing its primitive character and liberty in proportion as it grows in civilisation and political influence.

The struggle that the father and grandfather of Ivan Vassilievitch had sustained against the Tatars of Astracan and the Crimea recommenced with this new reign (1547). The latter availed themselves of the very difficult war in which the Russian monarch was engaged against the Knights Sword-bearers in Li-

* Levesque.

† It had been the same in France : they were called troops of the municipalities ; they were on foot, and were held in contempt.

‡ In the singular, *streletz*, a man who fires a musket (*Levesque*). Spitler writes *strieltzi*, and translates it by the word “guards.”

vonian. From hatred to those of Kasan, the Nogais offered themselves as auxiliaries ; and, with their assistance, Ivan advanced as a conqueror to Izlam Kermen and Oczakou. The Tcheremissians and Tschourvassians were reduced at the same time, and held in awe by a fortress which the Czar built at the mouth of the Suinga, which empties itself into the Volga (1551).

As already stated, the grandfather of Ivan the Fourth had endeavoured to subjugate the Knights Sword-bearers, and annex to his own dominions their territories, which their stern administration had rendered so miserable, that there seemed no likelihood of their authority taking deep root ; but the courage of the grand master Fursterberg, and the formidable artillery which bristled on the ramparts of his fortifications, neutralised the effect of a considerable disproportion in physical force. The Russian prince experienced a sanguinary defeat ; and though he came as a conqueror, he considered himself fortunate to sign a peace with the masters of Livonia for fifty years. In the treaty the Czar reserved to himself the ancient tribute which the Livonian peasants paid to Novgorod. This long armistice between two neighbours, the one of which was fated to destroy the other, terminated in 1554 without being renewed, and the tribute ceased to be paid.

While negotiations were pending to determine whether payment should be made or war declared, the grand master of Livonia formed an alliance with Sweden. Gustavus Vasa broke with Russia ; but scarcely had he commenced his march, when the new grand master, Henry de Galen, basely concluded peace with Russia, and remaining behind, declared his neutrality (1557). Gustavus Vasa, indignant, at once retreated, and abandoned his treacherous allies to their miserable fate. It must however be added, that that great man had met in the Russian monarch an opponent worthy of his prowess. Delivered from the Swedes, the Russian prince retraced his steps to Livonia, filled with the hope of extending the limits of his rule to the shores of the Baltic. That was one of the objects of his ambition.

The successor of Henry de Galen in the perilous post of grand master obtained succours from Poland, as his predecessor had obtained them from Sweden. He had also, though without success, solicited the aid of the emperor of Germany. The Poles, under the command of Prince of Radzivill, fought with the accustomed valour of that nation, but without improving the affairs of the grand master, Gothard Ketler, a man unequal to his arduous position, and moreover thwarted by his bishops, whose ambitious turbulence disorganised the country. Sensible of his weakness, and fearing its consequences, as soon as the Czar opened the campaign, this chief of the order of Sword-bearers made over Livonia to Sigismund Augustus, only reserving to himself, as a fief dependent on Poland, the provinces of Courland and Semigaglia, of which he was the first duke. The towns of Revel and Esthonia were at the same time placed under the protection of Sweden. Arensburg and the isle of Oesel were surrendered by the bishop, who was prince of that small territory, to the king of Denmark, who formed it into an apannage for the duke of Holstein, his brother.

The German writers, who think it a stain on their national honour to acknowledge acts so little creditable to the Knights Sword-bearers, affirm that the grand master Gothard Ketler had only pledged some castles and districts to the king of Poland, as security for discharging the expenses of the war; and assert that Sigismund took advantage of his position to exact the absolute cession of the territories which had been confided to him in trust. However this may be, unfortunate Livonia, whether victorious or vanquished, underwent a political dislocation, whether she succumbed to the ambition of Ivan, or became a prey to the cupidity of her friends and allies. Eric, successor to Gustavus Vasa, valued his assistance at the same price as Sigismund; that is to say, he demanded Revel and the whole of Esthonia. These two countries detached themselves from the common cause, and swore obedience and fidelity to the Swedish government. (1561.)

Thus terminated in Livonia the rule of an order once famous, and whose antique existence has fallen into the category of the most neglected traditions of history. It was one of those powers founded by force in the chaos of the middle ages; and that force also destroyed it, as soon as monarchical power or despotic centralisation boldly emancipated itself from the elements of oppression, and from all those decayed fragments of feudalism in the midst of which it slowly arrived at maturity.

The sovereignty of the Knights Sword-bearers was divided among five masters: Ivan Vassilievitch, Eric XIV. of Sweden, Sigismund Augustus of Poland, Duke Magnus of Holstein, and Gothard Ketler, created Duke of Courland and Semigaglia as the price of his renunciation.

But Ivan coveted the lion's share of the spoil. He commenced by signing a truce of two years with Sweden, that he might fall on Poland with all his strength. War continued to 1571, with various success, more exhausting than decisive. At the end of that term the Czar and the king of Poland, equally worn out, agreed to a truce of three years. It seems that Ivan even gave up his part of Livonia to Duke Magnus of Holstein, no doubt hoping that in more favourable circumstances a pretext would not be wanting for despoiling that sovereign of all his dominions, whom he desired to recognise as a king, under the immediate protection of Russia. This arrangement satisfied the people: they gave themselves up to the delusion of being independent of Poland, Sweden, and Russia, under the rule of a single master; overlooking the clause that gave a right of intervention, disguised by the term protection, which that last power had reserved to itself.*

Ivan had been compelled to postpone his designs on Livonia in consequence of the fresh incursions of the Tatars of the Crimea, who advanced as far as Moscow, ravaging the country, plundering

* The 'modern policy of Russia is thus traceable to an ancient date—protectorates to be absorbed in sovereignties.—J. D.

the towns, and even reducing the royal residence to ashes. (1575.) Within two or three years afterwards Livonia was wholly subjugated. Sweden and Poland immediately united their arms to maintain the former act of partition; and their preparations were so imposing in the eyes of the Czar, that in his terror he sought the mediation of the pope, Gregory XIII. It was then that the Jesuit Possevin was sent to Moscow by the holy father to negotiate a peace, which was concluded between the three powers. Ivan only obtained it by the disastrous sacrifice of all his conquests; but Livonia was desolated and depopulated. (1582-1584.) He had taken advantage of his first success to transport into his dominions all the male inhabitants, whom he considered as the real wealth of that unfortunate country. At the close of these transactions, the pope alone derived no profit from the war; for the promised return to the pale of the Latin church, with which Ivan had flattered him, to secure his mediation, had the result that might have been anticipated,—that is to say, it was wholly forgotten when the hour of danger had passed. However, Ivan might have alleged, to excuse the non-performance of his promise, that the interference of the holy father had not been efficacious; for the Russian ambassador at Stockholm having been insulted and imprisoned, war soon broke out afresh between the two powers. After equal losses on both sides, it terminated by a new peace, which only served as the pretext for a fresh quarrel.

The civil organisation of his empire engaged the attention of Ivan as much as his wars with the northern powers, who were his neighbours; and without doubt it is rather as a legislator than as a conqueror that he has merited the notice of history. In truth he has merited it by his frightful cruelties; and among the writers of the history of the north who belong to his epoch, he is famous as “the tyrant Basilides.” But to be impartial, we must paint the good deeds even of a tyrant, or at least his useful views.

Ivan the Third had invited foreigners into his country, and traced out the path which Peter the First afterwards followed,

not with greater ability, but under more favourable circumstances. From Germany and Italy he brought architects, founders in metals, goldsmiths and silversmiths, engineers, miners, indeed men experienced in almost all the arts. Vassili the Fourth and Ivan the Fourth followed his plans, and appropriated considerable sums to encourage the importation of foreign industry. But the latter prince surpassed his predecessors in the care he bestowed on pushing forward and enlarging the policy they had commenced. The former had only cast the seeds about at random ; he felt the importance of preparing the ground. The laws of Russia were insufficient for its advancement, for the codes of Jaroslaf and Vladimir probably contained the whole body of its jurisprudence ; and this edifice, scarcely raised, fell under the strokes of the times. It was not wholly reconstructed by Ivan. He was compelled to leave some savage remnants of ancient manners in his new legislation ; such, for example, as judicial combats, long since abolished by the rest of Europe. As the superstitions of the north were the source of this evil, it is quite natural that the north should be the longest infected by them. The collection of laws which Ivan gave to his subjects, after having discussed them with the deputies named by the nobility, was called Sudebnik, or the Manual of Judges.

Ivan the Fourth established the first printing-office at Moscow ; and obtained from Queen Elizabeth of England the first medical practitioners, physicians, and surgeons who ever exercised the healing art in those countries, where up to that period a hardy race had dispensed with their services.

Russia had lost her ancient commerce : the invasion, or rather the invasions of the Tatars had broken all relations with the east ; and the roads to Greece being, so to speak, destroyed, it was necessary to form new ones towards the western nations, the heirs of ancient nations repulsed from the south by Islamism. Accident served the purposes of Ivan, whilst the jealousy of the Hanse towns was preparing to thwart the accomplishment of his commercial projects. Some Englishmen wrecked on the coast

where the Dwina falls into the Icy Sea negotiated the first treaty which was formed between Russia and Great Britain. The town of Archangel, since so powerful and celebrated by the vastness of its trade, owes its origin to the same event. Vainly did Gustavus the First, who saw with regret this stride of Russia towards enterprises so well calculated to increase the power of a rival already too formidable, endeavour to throw obstacles in the way of those commercial relations: he was neither listened to by the king of Denmark, who alone could shackle the navigation of the Icy Sea; nor by the queen of England, too enlightened a promoter of the trade of her subjects to put any limit on its extension. Finally, Ivan established a market at Narva; to which the English, French, Dutch, and Lubeckers, and other merchants of the Hanse towns resorted, in spite of the rigorous prohibitions by which those very towns, only a few years before, had restrained their people from trafficking with Russia.* The awakening of this power presaged dangers to all who touched her frontiers; but nevertheless it behoved that its emancipation should be accomplished.

Russia was enabled to open up relations with the nations of the west without repudiating its old connections with the east, which had been to her the source of immense advantages. Ivan sought in the south-east those long-neglected roads which led to the rich countries of Persia, India, and China. One of the principal results of that attempt was the discovery and conquest of Siberia, a curious and singular event, of which we shall speak presently. Let us finish our sketch of the reign of Ivan.

The cruelties of this prince stand in frightful contrast with his essays in industry and legislation. They are so shocking, they bear on them such strong marks of insanity, that it is difficult to conceive how they could emanate from the brain of a man who

* The exports from Russia during the reign of Ivan, and even before the foundation of Archangel, consisted of dried fish, caviare, isinglass, wax, tallow, oil, wool, hair, hemp, flax, timber, and corn. Corn especially was an article of great trade with the northern countries, and even with France.

had any conception of order, justice, vast plans of civilisation, and social improvement. These contrasts in character attest the weakness of human organisation, and falsify all the rules of experimental philosophy.

Those who have sought to palliate the crimes of the tyrant Basilides have endeavoured to find excuses for his ferocity, or at least an explanation of the causes in which they originated, in the humiliations and sufferings he endured from the insolence of some nobles attached to the court of his father during his feeble minority. But to prove the worthlessness of this apology, it suffices to remark, that from the age of fourteen, Ivan then daring to exercise supreme power, he inflicted the most terrible punishments on his enemies, particularly on Vassili Chouiski, and commenced a long career of atrocities, which history can only place in parallel with those perpetrated by monsters who have most dishonoured the diadem of humanity.

At the age of sixteen Ivan married Anastasia, daughter of Roman Jouravitch. The gentle virtues of that admirable princess, superior to her age, having gained an ascendant over the mind of her husband, suspended the explosion of his sanguinary genius, and banished from his presence those wicked subalterns who fanned his furious passions; but after her too-early death, the lion whom she had chained on her bosom awoke more terrible than ever, and Russia trembled anew. The number of men, or more correctly, of both sexes and of all ages, whom Ivan caused to perish, exceeds the bounds of imagination. What is most astonishing is, that in the midst of so many murders and so many victims, the desolated nation did not produce one avenger, or leave a single monument or single trace of its indignation against such frightful atrocities: whence must be inferred not respect, but a religious worship, an idolatrous devotion in that nation for its princes, or the most profound servility. When Peter I., of no less terrible memory, exterminated the Strelitz, 150 years later, not one cry, not one curse, not one vow of vengeance, was raised

against his crown or his head, from the midst of those horrible outrages. When Catherine II. both poisoned and assassinated her husband, Peter III., to ascend his throne, the Russians bent the knee before her usurpation. In a word, Russia has produced many a Mirovitsch, but not a single Thrasybulus. It was only after the reign of Paul I., so intriguing, restless, but not tyrannical after the fashion of his predecessors, that the maxim was introduced into Russia, that it is lawful to kill a tyrant; and since we must be just to all the world, let us add that the English imported the doctrine to the banks of the Neva.*

Secluded in the menacing and impregnable fortress which he had built beyond Moscow, named Alexandrova Sloboda, surrounded by numerous satellites whom he had chosen from the lowest ranks, to become the stocks of a new class of powerful families, Ivan sent his sanguinary orders through the whole of his empire,—orders which he prepared in the intervals of his orgies. These men, named Opritchnikis, base agents of subornation, travelled through all the provinces to execute commands which they had drawn from the Czar by false accusations, to avenge the hatreds themselves had inspired by oppression and terrorism. The spoils of the victims were their reward. A portion of the ancient nobility perished by the odious machinations of these Opritchnikis; and their property fattened this new aristocracy of mud and blood, whose ignoble origin is still stamped by secret reprobation.†

The people of Novgorod, who always remembered the liberty they had lost, were suspected, during the first war of Ivan against the Tatars of the Crimea, of wishing to profit by the opportunity, and accept the king of Poland for their sovereign; and that ancient and opulent city was depopulated by the vengeance of the Czar. Having determined to visit that city, he first intercepted all communication between Novgorod and Moscow.‡ Soldiers in ambush

* This refers to the execution of Charles the First.—J. D.

† Levesque.

‡ Müller.

massacred all travellers, so that no warning could reach those whose destruction was sworn. When the Czar quitted Alexandrova Sloboda, a corps of Tatars preceded him; to prepare with fire and sword a road encumbered with ruins and drenched with blood.

He arrived at Novgorod satiated with carnage, and then heard mass. On leaving the church, accompanied by his son, he entered an enclosure expressly arranged to serve as the theatre of his vengeance, and in which the magistrates and principal inhabitants were confined. Both father and son, mounted on vigorous horses, precipitated themselves on these unfortunates, lance in hand, and continued slaying them till their strength was exhausted. When the iron fell from their fatigued hands, the remainder of the victims were handed over to the Opritchnikis, as the fragments of a banquet are thrown to dogs or slaves. Then the ice on the Volkof was broken, and the inhabitants were thrown into the river by hundreds. Not a day past but five or six hundred were condemned.* The massacre lasted during five weeks; the Czar then declared that he was sufficiently avenged; he then assembled the surviving inhabitants, commanded them to be faithful, and commended himself to their prayers. All the country round Novgorod was devastated, and the city never recovered this catastrophe. This ancient capital, the name of which still inspires the Russians with a religious feeling, is now a mere village.†

The towns of Pleskof and Twer, equally accused of secret intelligence with Poland, were also punished with rigour, but they were not depopulated. When these furies and murders were bruited abroad (1570), the unfortunate inhabitants of Moscow awaited the return of the Czar in silence and consternation. He arrives, he enters, and eighty gibbets are immediately erected in

* Müller.

† When Novgorod was built by the Slavonians, it is probable that the waters had not then abandoned the ground on which the new residence of the sovereigns is erected, and that boats sailed over the soil on which stands the foundation of the palace of the emperors.

the public square of the capital, numerous instruments of torture are brought thither, large fires are lighted, and large brass cauldrons are filled with boiling water. At this spectacle every one shuddered in the recesses of his dwelling. Soon 300 citizens, all illustrious by birth, and among whom were even princes of the Czar's family, were dragged from their dungeons, exhibiting on their bodies frightful marks of the tortures they had already undergone; collared or pushed forward by merciless soldiers, they arrived, already half immolated, on the theatre of these bloody executions. The courtiers, who had become hangmen, did not draw their swords, but their knives, and the first victim was hacked piecemeal. He was a secretary of state, suspended by his feet from a gallows. After him an old treasurer of the crown perished most horribly in the hands of a colonel of the guard and a general of cavalry, jointly charged with his execution.

Women, children, were subjected to various tortures. They swept the ensanguined square with their bodies; 200 of the accused were ranged in a line before the prince, and as many courtiers struck off a head, shouting plaudits of joy. Lastly a venerable old man was brought forward, whom the Czar transfixed with a lance. He then walked about with calm ferocity; he coldly examined the victims, recognised the head of the treasurer, insulted it, and cut it in twain with his sword. He then went into the houses of the victims just butchered, and inflicted on their wives similar tortures, till they gave up the treasures of their husbands. Three days afterwards he decapitated several members of the same families; and extending his fury to the senseless corpses of his victims, he struck them with his axe. The bodies left on the square of execution were devoured by dogs, and their bones scattered. Eight hundred women were drowned. It was sport for Ivan to see those whom he suspected chopped in pieces, or plunged over and over in the cauldrons of boiling water.

In the Livonian war, having taken by assault the town of Wittenstein, he (Ivan) put the inhabitants to the sword; but the

commandant, and all who had escaped the first furies of the soldiery, were by his orders spitted on lances, and mercilessly roasted. Some years afterwards, and in the same country, he treated with the same ferocity the inhabitants of Wenden, whose heroism would have disarmed any other conqueror. They had set fire to the powder-magazine to bury themselves in the ruins of their fortress. Ivan hanged all who did not perish in that common disaster. He besieged Wolmar; the place was taken by assault, and all the inhabitants died under torture. When the Poles, under the leadership of their brave prince, Stephen Bathori, retook Polotsk, in Lithuania, they learned with horror the excesses committed by the soldiers of Ivan on their prisoners. Some had been torn in pieces; the bowels of others had been ripped open; others had been plunged into cauldrons of boiling water, their hands being tied behind their backs. It was thus, according to the same authors, the Russians, besieged in Sokol, filled with powder and peas the stomachs of their prisoners, and, after setting them on fire, hurled them into the camp of the enemy. When this terrible prince appeared sunk down under the burden of years, the boyars, and the whole nation, looked to his heir with hope; they even ventured to entreat the Czar to intrust to his eldest son the command of the troops which were about to march against Poland. This wish, so imprudently expressed, operated as a sentence of death against the unfortunate Czarevitsch; his father slew him with an iron club. This murder, its causes and concomitant circumstances, has been differently narrated; but the fact which remains is, that Ivan killed his son. Racked by remorse, he wished, it is said, to become a monk, by way of atonement: for we must not forget to remark, that this man, so cruel, had the sort of religion, and all the religion, that the priests taught at that epoch, when every thing was purchasable. After this last crime, Ivan distributed money among all the monasteries; he even sent considerable sums to the patriarchs of Greece. It is this combination of all the instincts of ferocity

and all the weaknesses of bigotry, which has justly caused him to be compared with Louis XI. Moreover, their political resemblance is not less striking than their moral; for if one destroyed the great barons, the other crushed the great boyars. This prince, so cruel, was also a great buffoon,—another similarity with Louis XI.; and the art, as easy as contemptible, of amusing a party by coarse jokes, was at his court the ladder of promotion. But these advantages were counterbalanced by fearful risks; and more than one titled buffoon, having failed in humour, or having overstepped prudent boundaries, remained under the table, killed by the stab of a knife; others were acquitted by the loss of an ear. One of them, on whom the tyrant had decreed punishment, prostrated himself without uttering a cry, and thanked his master for that mark of his favour. Sometimes, when the Czar saw a crowd of people assembled, he let loose the most vigorous and most voracious bears of his menagerie. He laughed with his son at the terror of the unfortunate persons pursued by these ferocious animals; at the grief of the husbands whose wives were carried off; at the cries of the helpless mothers who saw their children stifled and torn to pieces, without being able to render them assistance. If the parents of the victims of this barbarous sport complained, it was deemed a favour if they were given some money, and assured that the prince and his son had been highly delighted. Often, at his country residence, he covered the poor wretches whom he desired to punish with the skins of bears, let slip against them dogs trained in England for this cruel sport, and saw with pleasure the objects of his vengeance torn in pieces. If the Czar in cold blood committed such horrors, what must have been the excesses of his cruelty when animated by hatred or suspicion!

Mikail Vorotinski, whose only crime consisted in possessing the principality of Pronok, and in the ability to collect on that domain several thousands of soldiers, perished under the most frightful tortures; and all his relations, all his race, were exterminated with him. When he was tortured, the Czar amused him-

self with pushing red-hot coals against the sufferer. Such also was the fate, for a similar cause, of Cheremetef, lord of the town of Kolomna. When reasonable complaints or real motives were wanting, it was pretended that there was a conspiracy against the person or the power of Ivan. People were accused now of sorcery, now of vague language. Witnesses and executioners were always those who were least wanted to complete the sacrifice of victims, provided they were taken among the courtiers. In the affair of the unfortunate Cheremetef, the rage of the Czar was not limited to him. It seems that he was beloved by his vassals; and the unfortunate inhabitants of Kolomna were involved in his ruin. After massacring the mass of the people, he shut up the principal inhabitants in a house, which he blew up with gunpowder: their wives and daughters were dishonoured before being put to death. The satellites of the Czar stripped the women of the people, and drove them stark naked into a wood; there they met men, stationed on purpose, who pursued and scourged them with whips, the forest resounding with their shrieks. The widow of Cheremetef was confined in a monastery, and all his family destroyed.

Let us pause. Certainly we have stated enough, but not one quarter of the monstrous deeds which the most impartial historians and the most calm writers impute to Ivan-IV. Religion, modesty, infancy, and old age,—to him nought was sacred. Frequently the wives of his subjects who happened to be beautiful were suddenly carried off, and after suffering the grossest indignities from himself and the officers of the household, were sent back to their husbands, provided they had not perished under their most infamous excesses; but the greater number were killed or drowned. Sometimes the corpses of these ill-fated women were suspended at the gate of their husbands' dwelling, or placed at table before them during several days. Excesses of cruelty and resignation equally frightful, equally difficult to believe! When the Czar met a woman in the streets, he asked her who her husband was, whence she came, whither she was going; and when she belonged to a

man displeasing to him, he obliged her to remain in an exposed situation, till himself, his courtiers, his guards, and all the people had passed. Finally, this king perfected the system of spies, and degraded, as much as he could, through terror, the people whom he otherwise wished to extricate from the chaos of barbarism. These attempts at civilisation, made with success ; these plans of aggrandisement, pursued with constancy ; these reforms in the law ; these foreign arts introduced into the bosom of Russia,—have appeared to some writers who have studied the history of this prince, to compensate his inconceivable furies. That opinion is not our own. If those furies stood alone in the reign of Ivan IV., if he had only been a monster, it might be said that he was a delirious fool, a sanguinary madman, and human dignity would suffer less by this admission ; but it should be remembered that all these atrocities sprang out of a head not wholly illogical, and sufficiently capacious to admit ideas—even ideas of good. Such are the fruits of absolute power.

To complete this picture of the reign of Ivan, the conquest of Siberia remains to be narrated. It was not the least important of the events which signalled his epoch, nor especially the least singular. This conquest, the result of the fortunate audacity of a chief of bandits, could not be free from cruelties and crimes ; nevertheless, it would be possible to make it pass for an example of morality, contrasted with the expeditions under the personal command of Ivan. Jermak Timofief, one of the hetmans or chiefs of the Cossacks of the Don, had for a long time desolated the shores of the Volga and those of the Caspian Sea by his depredations. Merchants and foreign ambassadors could not traverse those countries. In 1577, troops sent by the Czar pursued these brigands, destroyed part of them, dispersed the rest ; but the greatest number of the fugitives ascended the Kama, under the chief we have named. Arrived at Orel, a small town which then belonged to the family of Strogonoff, he obtained from those rich merchants, who traded with the merchants of Siberia, guides and aid with which to penetrate into that country ; and he made

himself master of it, after having triumphed, through prodigious fortitude, over obstacles which he encountered in the natural barriers which defended that country, and in the valour of the inhabitants. The name of Siberia usually conveys to the mind no other idea than frost and snow; we picture to ourselves an ill-fated country, where man, no longer the favourite but the outcast of nature, exhausts the inclemency and the fury of the elements. There is exaggeration in these generally accredited notions. Siberia is not wholly miserable. Vegetation cannot flourish on an iron soil; but the reindeer, an auxiliary to the force of man, as the ox and horse are elsewhere, nourishes with his milk, his blood, and his flesh, the Siberian whose burdens he carries. Immense forests abounding in game, numerous rivers abounding in fish, furnish inexhaustible means of subsistence. Finally, the southern plains of Siberia are wonderfully fertile. The bowels of the earth are prodigal of other treasures. They contain a large quantity of elephants' teeth,—fossil ivory, the remains of a distant age, and doubtlessly of some great physical catastrophe,—and abundant mines, many of which yield gold and precious stones. Rich furs, refused to the rest of the earth, are objects of desire more keen than the pearls of Arabia or the diamonds of Golconda, and would alone form the staple of a vast and lucrative commerce for that country, if it existed as an independent state. But where does the ambitious fever of domination not penetrate?—where is not the ravaging arm of despotism stretched forth? Vainly had Nature established the liberty of the Siberian under a rigorous sky; the Russian government, unable to colonise and people that country, made it their hell. It is one for convicts, habituated to other latitudes; and it is there, in the vicinity of Tobolsk, that, from reign to reign, the victims of their own ambition or errors, and of ministerial oppression, illustrious exiles or vulgar criminals, expiate their faults or those of their destiny. In the history of this conquest, we are at first struck with the similarity it bears to that of the Spaniards in America, the discovery of which took

place at nearly the same time ; as if the sixteenth century had been privileged over all other epochs, and as if the world was then fated to aggrandisement on all sides before the steps of those who dared to advance. Here, as in America, a chief, a savage Cortez, followed by priests, and blending, as the Spaniard did, practices of superstition with acts of ferocity,—forcing soldiers drunk with carnage, and loaded with bloody spoils, to approach the table of the holy sacrifice of the mass,—subjugates a considerable population with a handful of audacious adventurers ; for Jermak, starting with six thousand soldiers, completed his victories with only fifteen hundred. He possessed, in common with the Spanish conqueror, all the resources of courage, stratagem, we may say of genius ; and he found in the Tatars more formidable enemies than the subjects of Montezuma or those of the Incas. On both sides fire-arms produced the greatest astonishment among the aborigines of the country ; but in the north as in the south, a devotedness the most energetic and touching defends the natal soil, invaded by perfidious and cruel enemies. The Siberians, the Vogoulians, the Kirgis, even the Samoides,—so dear is country to the heart of man,—struggled for their unfruitful steppes and frozen marshes with the same intrepidity and despair as the Peruvians and Mexicans for their magnificent countries. The result was the same for both. As to the conquerors, their fate was dissimilar. Christopher Columbus and Fernando Cortez, both great men, experienced the ingratitude and contempt of their princes. Jermak, a ferocious bandit, whose rapines and murders had doomed him to the axe of the laws, when he discovered Siberia,—Jermak was loaded with honours and favours by the Czar. Let us add, however, that this Cossack leader, after having subjugated the country and fixed the centre of his dominion at Sibir, despatched to the Russian monarch one of his officers to inform him of his adventures, and do homage to him for the conquest. By that act of wisdom he obtained his pardon and that of his comrades, and secured his fortune.*

* Since the conquest, Siberia had always remained a very miserable and

MANNERS AND USAGES OF THE RUSSIANS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The reader has seen what was the state of civil society in the Russian nation during the tenth century ; he has remarked in its laws and its manners at that epoch the character common to all the warlike people who came from a certain part of the north. At a later date, those vestiges of Scandinavian genius, which at first had, as it were, choked the seeds borrowed from oriental civilisation, allowed the influence of the latter to germinate and predominate ; this, at least, may be concluded from the picture of their manners and customs in the sixteenth century, traced by the estimable writer who hitherto has often served as our guide. The most striking traits in that picture are, the seclusion of women practised in the East, and the *surveillance* used towards them become more rigorous and more tyrannical ; finally, the excess of paternal authority and the miserable condition of the peasants, who could not hold property even when they were not slaves. As to personal servitude, it seems that it remained up to this period what it was at the first epoch ; slaves, strictly so called, were only captives taken in war, and those purchased of the Cossacks and Tatars ; all these slaves were usually manumitted on the death of their master. The traders always enjoyed great privileges ; they formed a particular body in the state, and voted

very neglected country. After the battle of Pultawa, Peter the Great exiled thither ten thousand Swedish prisoners, officers and privates. The former, almost all men of spirit and merit, forced to struggle against a niggardly soil and a rigorous climate, displayed so much industry and energy, that they conquered all those obstacles to an extent which seemed impossible. Colonies of Russians, of Poles, of Tatars, since sent by the government, have continued the successful attempts of the Swedes ; and by culture and the clearing of part of the land, and the increase of population, have succeeded in rendering this inhospitable country habitable. More than thirty towns and more than two thousand villages have been built. A brilliant commerce is there established with China.

in the grand assemblies of the nation. Judicial duel remained in force ; excepting that single combat was wholly unknown to the Russians, as well as the point of honour in which it originates. Justice was not administered gratuitously ; the pleader feed the judge ; thus iniquity reigned in the tribunals. Women who killed their husbands were buried alive up to the neck, and condemned to await death in that position. The atrocity of this punishment leads to the supposition that they sometimes assassinated their husbands in retaliation of the rigorous punishment to which they were exposed. The mode of living was still very hard and sad ; and despite a sort of savage luxury displayed by the nobles, the luxury of comfort was totally unknown even in their palaces. The buildings, constructed of wood, and better adapted to keep out cold than please the eye by symmetrical elegance of proportion, were mean and vile, and small openings in the shape of loop-holes served for windows. The rooms were surrounded with benches fixed to the wall, and no other seats were known even at the court. Foreigners imported silver in bulk, cloths, silk stuffs, velvets, pearls, jewels, gold in a raw state, and gold chains, and particularly trinkets, on which a large profit was realised. They exported to Germany furs and wax ; to Poland and Turkey, hides, furs, the teeth of seals ; to the Tatars, saddles, bridles, hides, dresses of wool and thread, ironmongery in general ; but the sale of arms to them was severely prohibited. The Russians were not acquainted with the hereditary titles of count or baron, which they only adopted under Peter I. They had princes of a superior and inferior nobility. The title of *kniaz*, or prince, was for a long time only granted to the descendants of Rourik, their first sovereign. The Tatar princes, converted to Christianity, also assumed that title. The ordinary arms of the Russians were the bow, javelin, axe, club, helmet, lance, and the coat of mail. Infantry was little known before the reign of Vassili Ivanowitch. The Russians attacked with impetuosity, but were easily discouraged. They seemed to say to the enemy : “ Flee, or we will flee.”

FOURTH EPOCH.

EXTINCTION OF THE HOUSE OF ROURIK ; USURPATIONS AND CIVIL WARS FROM 1584 TO 1613.

IVAN the Fourth, though twice married, only left two sons,—Fedor, or Theodore, and Dmitri, or Demetrius. Fedor had been called to the throne by the formal will of the Czar : the hereditary succession to the throne had for a long period been a recognised right, or a fact sanctioned by usage. Fedor was thirty-seven years of age ; no objection could be urged against the prince. However, rights which no longer existed for the people at large were still represented ; and deputies of towns, chosen from among the most eminent of the nobility, went to Moscow, and entreated Fedor to accept the empire, and to consecrate the supreme power intrusted to him by the ceremony of a coronation. The prince did not refuse lending himself to this solemn farce ; an unworthy parody, which satisfied a degraded people. We seem to be reading a history of yesterday in the recital of this ancient baseness. However, one thing was wanting to this ridiculous ceremonial, in which men scarred by the iron hand of a despot gravely enacted the part of deputies of a free nation : the great bears in the menagerie of Ivan should have been let loose on this vile multitude.

Fedor was as feeble in mind as in body ; and his incapacity excited the ambitious hopes of those whom his father's sceptre had constrained, prepared new agonies for the state, and was the cause of a fresh enfeeblement which, during twenty years, made Russia reel and stagger. When dying, his father appointed three boyars to serve as his counsellors. A fourth leading nobleman, whom history names Boydau-Belski, had been selected as guardian

to the prince. This ambitious man aspired to the throne ; he proposed to exclude Fedor, and substitute Demetrius, counting on ruling in the name of that child. His scheme failed, and he was exiled by the enraged people.

More skilful and not less ambitious, another nobleman, Boris Godounof, brother of the Czarina, wife of Ivan IV., seduced by the attractions of power, plotted with more success. It is true that he employed those decisive means which alone can speedily accomplish the aim of political adventurers ; I mean, the sword, poison, pretended conspiracies, informations purchased with gold, and confessions extracted by torture. The three boyars appointed counsellors to the prince were successively meshed in the snares which had been prepared for them with consummate perfidy. Those who were not put to death were shaved and made monks : at that time in Russia, and almost throughout the whole of Europe, this was a mode of political death, but afterwards it appears to have been discontinued.

Boris, free from those who might have thwarted his ambition, assured of numerous partisans whose fortunes were attached to his own, and possessed of immense treasures, had only one more crime to commit, and that was the greatest of all : he resolved to perpetrate it ; and the young Czarewitch Demetrius was assassinated on the 15th of May, 1591, in the middle of the day. Some authors affirm that the deed was done at night, which permitted the substitution of another victim for the prince ; however this may be, the name of Demetrius, whether honestly claimed or usurped by ambition and imposture, became the pretext of most sanguinary disputes.

Boris constituted himself avenger of the blood that had been shed ; and the inhabitants of Ouglitch, where the murder had been committed, were put to death, banished, or imprisoned. As to the assassins, twelve in number, they were immediately stoned by the people. Within a few years the imbecile Fedor died : whether Boris had allowed his precocious infirmities to lead to their natural

result, or whether he had hastened the end of that prince by a crime, from which he could not have shrunk after the assassination of Demetrius.

Russia, advancing in greatness under the predecessors of Fedor, continued its progress during the reign of that feeble prince, thanks to the active and firm administration of Godounof. Some possessions were annexed to the immense territories already incorporated. Ingria and Carelia had been obtained from the king of Sweden in exchange for Esthonia; and the towns of Ivangord, Iambourg, and Kaporja, which had been taken during the war, remained to Russia by virtue of the treaty of peace.

The race of Rourik was extinct in the person of Fedor. That house is called by the Russian historians the "GRAND DYNASTY," and justly so; it had filled the throne during eight complete centuries, given fifty-two sovereigns to the empire, and, indeed, formed Russia.

Having thus cleared the way to the throne, Boris pretended, by an excess of hypocrisy, that he had no desire to ascend it. He knew that the state, torn by factions, needed a master. He saw the nobles, jealous of each other, ready to vie with each other in purchasing the favour of a new master. He allowed himself to be importuned in the name of the country by the different orders of the nation. His election had taken place in the palace of the Patriarch with the customary solemnities, but he persisted in his refusal; to conquer his resistance and his pretended aversion to grandeur, it was necessary that the first election should be confirmed by a second. Thus, while the secret manœuvres of his partisans smoothed the way to the throne which he had coveted by so many crimes, this man, full of an ambition which devoured his soul, reached power under the guise of the purest virtue. Without yielding in cruelty to any of his predecessors, Boris Godounof exercised his authority with more moderation, that is, with more tact. Utterly immoral, he had too large an intellect to be a prodigal in crime. He possessed the quality of

mercy, many of those points which shed lustre on character, and some of those ostentatious virtues so easily displayed by the great, and which rarely fail in their effect on the multitude. He fortified, or at least appeared to fortify, his power by two acts of profound policy : the first was to attach the religious hierarchy to his interests ; the second, to keep up and envenom the divisions that existed between the nobles and the people. The people regarding him as a popular prince, applauded the fall of the most illustrious heads,—a bloody game, in which they lost more than they gained. The liberty of municipal institutions in their behalf did not rise on the ruins of the nobility ; on the contrary, it was under the rule of this prince that the serfdom of the soil was established, and that the Russian peasants lost the quality of men.

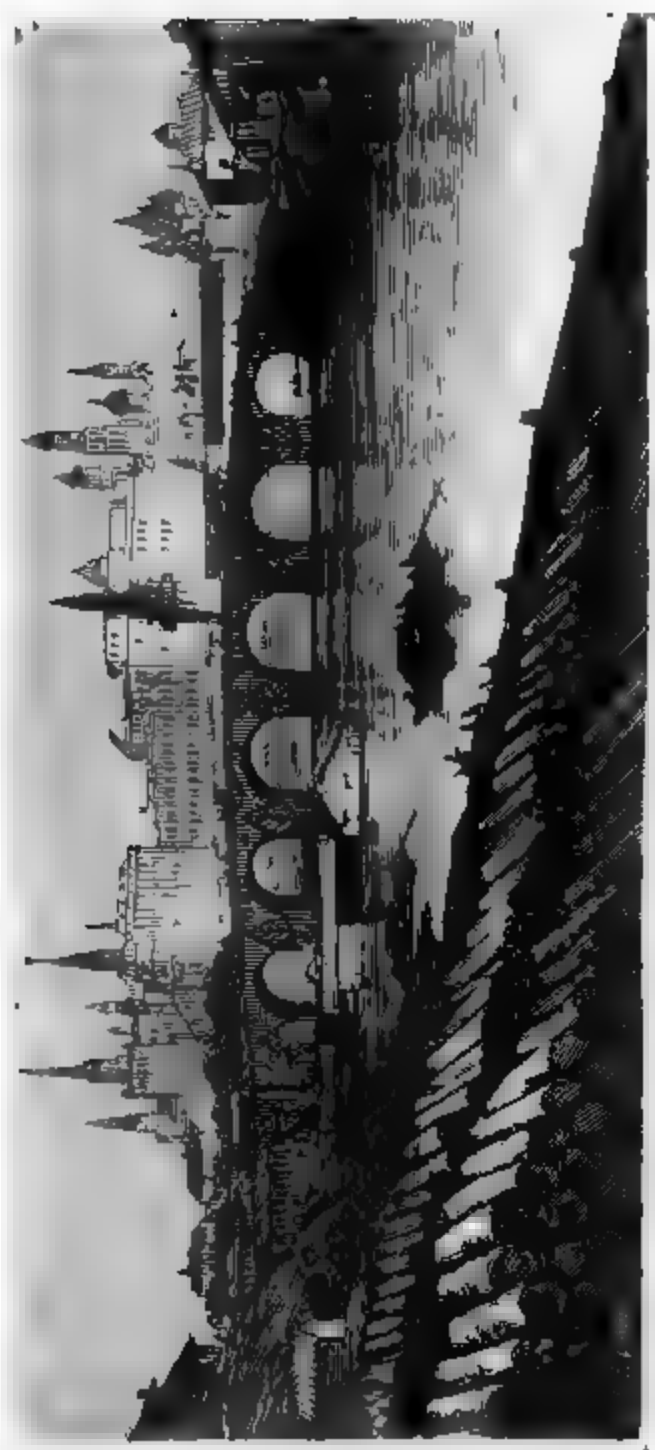
There were no public executions under this reign. Boris secretly stifled some conspiracies. He did not think his power sufficiently legitimate to exhibit the scaffolds in full day ; but executioners always at his command, and profiting by darkness, carried death and mourning secretly to the domestic hearth. He summoned informers to his aid, purchased and decorated spies. The infamous thirst for gold created gangs of those wretches ; complaint or remonstrance was not allowed, and even silence was not a secure asylum for thought. However, Godounof seemed to be loved by the people, whom he deluded with glory ; for he pacified the empire, maintained, and even aggrandised its limits ; renewed former treaties with neighbouring powers, formed new alliances, favoured trade and industry, and appeared worthy of the power he had usurped.* So much prudence, so much atten-

* In speaking of the horrible famine which at that epoch desolated Moscow, to such an extent that 127,000 dead bodies were heaped up in the streets, Mr. Levesque remarks, that the neighbouring provinces, the Ukraine, Kasan, Astracan, did not feel any scarcity ; and adds the following remark : “ As vast provinces enjoyed abundance while those in the capital perished, we must conclude, in spite of the great talents of Godounof, that the art of government had yet to make considerable progress.”

tion to public business, could not, however, avert the storm that was gathering to burst on his head. From the depths of an obscure cloister issued the avenger of Fedor and Demetrius.

A young man of noble family, or the son of a boyar, devoted to monastic life by the abuse of paternal power, but inclined to another kind of life by his earliest passions and feelings, conceived the daring scheme of restoring Demetrius to existence. It is said that he was instigated to the act by one of his superiors, who founded his hopes of success on the remarkable resemblance between the young monk and the prince assassinated at Ouglitch. However this may be, Jachko Otrepief, or Gregori Otropeia, after frequent changes from monastery to monastery, as a bad soldier changes from regiment to regiment, established himself in the palace of the Patriarch at Moscow, who employed him as a copyist, when he began, after having carefully studied his part, to give himself out secretly for the young Demetrius, believed to be dead. He passed for a young fool; and Boris, informed of his pretensions, contented himself with ordering his removal to a provincial monastery, under a severe superior. Warned of his danger, Gregori Otrepief escaped, and took refuge in Poland.

The governor of Kief received him with kindness, placed him in a famous monastery, and appointed him deacon of his palace. In defiance of the austere rules of his order, and the practices attached to the Greek ritual, Gregori Otrepief ate meat; and, driven again from his convent for that abominable crime, he was abandoned by his protector. As he had not abandoned his audacious project, this new disgrace became an additional motive for its prompt execution. But before commencing he required both an asylum and support. He sought and found a new protector in Prince Adam Wichnevetski, who received him among his domestics. It is from this time that he carried out his scheme with consummate address. He was young and of a prepossessing appearance, gifted with a natural eloquence which touched and persuaded; and these qualities were strengthened by an ardent



MOSCOW AND THE KREMLIN, FROM THE WEST.

desire to succeed, and supported by an immovable presence of mind.

As soon as his pretended secret began to circulate, the Poles saw the advantage they might draw from it, whether it was founded in truth or falsehood, by creating disturbances in Russia. The King of Poland, that he might not violate the last treaty, did not give any personal aid to the impostor, but allowed his nobles to do so, and they espoused his cause with enthusiasm. One of them, named Mnichek, palatine of Sandomir, promised him his daughter in marriage; and the Polish Diet being sitting at the time, Mnichek took him to that assembly, and introduced him as the legitimate heir to the throne of Russia. Before this august assembly, presided over by King Sigismund, Gregori Otrepief narrated his adventures; he shed tears, and the majority of his auditors sympathised with the grief by which he seemed to be penetrated: the illusions of falsehood sometimes deceive those by whom they are invented, after frequent repetition. Were the Polish nobility the dupes or the accomplices of this audacious fable? This cannot be decided; but certain it is, that on quitting the Diet, Sigismund treated the pretended Demetrius with all the honours due to the rank he claimed. Possibly Demetrius had promised to give up some province of the empire. It is said that he engaged to re-unite Russia to the Church of Rome, and that already he had consented to receive instructions from a Jesuit.

The report of the adventures of Otrepief reached Moscow, and alarmed Boris. In spite of the rigour of his early administration, Russia was neither calm nor contented. He was execrated by the nobles, whom he had so cruelly decimated and persecuted. They lost no time in fomenting a revolt; and when the false Demetrius appeared on the frontier, with an army raised by the palatines of Poland, the towns of Tshernigof, Novgorod, Severski, and many others declared in his favour. The Cossacks of the Don sent him their ataman, or hetman; and the news of the

extraordinary resurrection of Demetrius soon spread throughout the empire, and shook it to its foundations. Otrepief, with the Poles and Cossacks, sustained two successive defeats. Had the Russian generals profited by the consternation and divisions that followed these first reverses, the career of the impostor would have closed ; but they gave him time to rally, and the flames of rebellion soon reached the capital. Boris appealed to the Patriarch, and to those nobles who had remained faithful to his cause, to recall the people to their duty ; but the intervention of the lower clergy and of the nobility was powerless, and the most solemn anathemas were disregarded ; for a very wretched people are strong in rebellion, when it has on its side ideas of right and legitimacy.

In this crisis Boris died. Seized with violent pains on quitting his table, he felt his end approaching, and immediately assumed the monastic habit, to expire in the odour of sanctity. This expiation was fashionable at that period : the monks invented it for their own profit ; and it was not a fatiguing ceremony for sinners in their last agonies. Some writers have asserted that Boris, apprised of his fall by sinister presentiments, poisoned himself, that he might not survive his loss of the throne. Such a resolution appears natural in a bold usurper ; but it would have been a nobler act had Boris met death sword in hand.

The impartiality of several historians renders justice to the talents which distinguished Boris ; but one of them properly remarks, that posterity, indignant at his crimes, ought specially to execrate his memory, if it be true that under his administration, during the reign of the imbecile Fedor, the Russian peasants were reduced to serfage. Up to that date, it is said, there were no slaves ; that domestic servants were engaged by contract ; and that when any difficulty arose between employer and employed, it was adjusted by a special tribunal. But the ambitious enterprises of Ivan had depopulated the country ; the peasants abandoned the almost desert fields, became vagabonds, and frequently

brigands: to remedy these evils, Fedor, or rather Godounof, could discover no other remedy than loading them with chains and fastening them to the soil.*

Let us resume the thread of the narrative. After the death of Boris, the clergy, the boyars, and the different orders of the state proclaimed the son of Fedor, scarcely sixteen years of age.

* I doubt, however, adds the same author, whether serfdom did not commence at an earlier date. I believe that the inhabitants of the rural districts round Novgorod, and perhaps those of other similar districts, were not fixed to the earth like the plants they cultivated, but were the peasants of so many princes holding from the crown, whose petty sovereignty sometimes consisted in a village, free to quit the lands of their little tyrants, who, by such emigrations, might have been left without subjects.

There are several important remarks to be made, and which are not made by M. Levesque, on this remarkable event in the reign of Boris Godounof. The first comes in confirmation of what we have already said of the slow and difficult progress of the Russian people in the formation of civil society; for the sudden servitude of the Russian peasants, at the close of the sixteenth century, is evidently a retrograde movement. The second remark to be made is, that the establishment of Christianity did but little to ameliorate the condition of the people. If the revolution in the lot of the peasants had taken place, for example, in the ninth or tenth centuries, it might be objected that the maxims of the Gospel were not sufficiently accredited at that epoch; but, on the contrary, the fact is, that the people then enjoyed freedom. At the close of the sixteenth century, the clergy were all-powerful; their riches and political influence were immense. We have seen that Boris, on the point of losing the throne, addressed himself to the Patriarch to bring back the inhabitants of Moscow to his interests, and that he died in the frock of a monk; whence we are authorised to infer, that religion was one of the dominant springs, and perhaps the most powerful of all in society. Not only did it not prevent a great and criminal violation of the sacred rights of so many millions of men, but it is very probable that its ministers sanctioned it, as they sanctioned the usurpation of Boris, streaming with the blood of the legitimate dynasty.

The Christian religion is sufficiently full of the blessings it has spread through the world; it is so adorable in its primitive character, as transmitted to us by its divine Author and the Apostles, that we may be permitted to signalise the error of those who have regarded it as one of the principal causes of the abolition of slavery; we therefore take advantage of this opportunity to suggest some doubts in this respect, fortifying ourselves by the most respectable authorities.

But this feeble successor of Godounof could not arrest the fortune of Demetrius. The inhabitants of the capital, who had risen in favour of the latter, seized the youthful Czar, his mother, and all connected with the usurper by the ties of blood or of affection. Otrepief put them all to death. The widowed Czarina was strangled, and Fedor smothered. Axenia alone, the daughter of Boris, was spared, on account of her rare beauty, and immured in a convent,—probably reserved for the lust of the butcher of her family. The body of Boris was ruthlessly exhumed, and remained for a long time exposed to the gaze and outrages of the populace; and when that brutal rage was satiated, the corpse was conveyed to the cemetery of a convent, and covered with a little earth.

1603. The impostor entered Moscow in triumph, followed by the armies of both nations and a numerous retinue of the highest nobility. Nothing more was required than his recognition by the Czarina, widow of Ivan, who ought to have been his mother. The interview between them took place with fond embraces and tears. It now seemed that all doubts were removed; however, others still remained.

Plots were immediately formed against the new sovereign. At the head of one of the detected conspiracies was the Prince Vassili Ivanovitch Chouiski.* He was judged by the people and condemned. The Czar pardoned him. That generosity occasioned his fall. Chouiski, devoted to Boris, had been present at the murder of Demetrius. He of course knew the person whom he had ordered to be put to death, and therefore whether the legitimate heir to the throne had perished or yet survived. In both cases he was sure to be the enemy of him who reappeared under the name of Demetrius and claimed his rights.

Otrepief, intoxicated with his good fortune, soon abused it. He concluded an alliance with Poland, demanded the hand of the daughter of the Palatine of Sandomir, quartered 4000 Poles in Moscow, and placed the crown of the czars on the head of a foreign

* He is also called Schuskoi and Zuski. J. D.

beauty. The presence of the irreconcilable enemies of their nation, their haughtiness, their irreverence in the churches, filled both people and nobles with indignation. By his shameless excesses and prodigality, the new sovereign rapidly lost the favour of that population which had proclaimed him with transport. Chouiski watched the moment again to light the torches of civil war. He entered the city during the festivities which celebrated the marriage of Demetrius; and on the night of the 17th of May, a rumour suddenly arose that the Poles, who had accompanied the daughter of the Palatine of Sandomir, had plotted the massacre of the inhabitants of Moscow. Suddenly the people sprang to arms, and rushed tumultuously into the quarters of the Poles; the gates were burst open, and, surprised in their sleep, the Poles were mercilessly butchered. The same movement of fury led the masses to the palace where Demetrius slept, almost without guards and in imprudent security, although, it is said, he had been warned of the revolt that was preparing; but this is difficult to be believed.

Impostor or not, the last moments of this prince were horrible. When the conspirators had broken the gates of the royal residence, Chouiski marched at their head, a dagger in one hand, a crucifix in the other. Otrepief vainly attempted to speak; his voice was not heard. He withdrew into the interior of the palace, and leapt from a window while some of his faithful followers were being massacred. In his fall one of his legs was broken; the people ran towards him, and for a moment popular fury was suspended; the Strelitz were preparing to defend him, and even spoke of dying in his defence. At this crisis a deputation sent to the Czarina, the widow of Ivan, returned, and announced that she disowned the miscreant who dared to call her his mother; she declared that she had only recognised him through fear of death. The fury of the people was rekindled, and the miserable Otrepief expired, pierced with a thousand wounds. His body, exposed on the public square for many hours, was at last thrown on a pile of fagots, and burnt to cinders.

1606. Chouiski, proclaimed by his faction, crowned in the cathedral church of Moscow, seated himself on the blood-stained throne. Suddenly the earth again rocks to and fro. Agitation prevails ; a report is spread that Demetrius is not dead, but that one of his officers had been massacred in his place. A part of Russia rises in favour of this new impostor. By this clashing of revolutions, by this stormy promptitude to revolt, we may form some idea of the degree of happiness enjoyed by the people under such masters, whether legitimate or usurpers. The new pretender was, however, beaten ; but he was soon replaced by another, who called himself the son of Fedor, and whom the Cossacks placed at their head. He was defeated, made prisoner, and shared the fate of his predecessor.

Finally a new false Demetrius appeared on the stage, and also found numerous partisans. They were not savage Cossacks or a handful of malcontents who recognised him, but whole towns. At this epoch, impudence and credulity must have been contagious in Russia. The Poles were active in supporting this last impostor as soon as he gained credit by some victories. The Palatine Mnichek sought him in his camp ; and his daughter Marina, wife of the first Demetrius, recognised him as her first husband, and acted accordingly. It is evident that she could not have been the dupe of the imposture ; patriotic devotedness, and the desire to injure the enemies of her country, could alone have induced this high-born lady to receive the embraces of an infamous brigand, for such he is designated by historians.

Whilst the last Demetrius was marching against Moscow, spreading terror, and only meeting subjected towns on his route, a conspiracy was hatching in the city against Chouiski. Under the pretence of sending him succours, the king of Sweden introduced a horde of pillagers into the Russian provinces ; and famine, another auxiliary to revolt, afflicted the country. The capital was in the most frightful position. So many evils caused by the Poles did not yet appease their political hatred. Sigismund openly declared

war against the Czar, and invested Smolensko. Then a division arose in the camp of the impostor; and seeing himself on the point of being abandoned by the Russians, he fled. Sapieha, a Polish nobleman skilled in war, brought back this fugitive bugbear to Moscow, and again roused the people and the nobles against Chouiski. Abandoned even by his relations, this partisan of one revolution and avenger of a second expiated his crimes, and was forced to retire into a convent, and there assume the frock.

1611. Russia was now without a sovereign; and the nobles, divided into parties, knew not to whom they could plight their oaths. They determined to govern by themselves. However, the false Demetrius still blockaded Moscow. Poland offered a king; he was the son of their own king, and on this condition Poland had abandoned the cause of the impostor. Necessity forced the acceptance of this humiliating proposal, and the dethroned Czar was conducted with his family to Sigismund. The Tatars, who were among the allies of the false Demetrius, tiring of the war, massacred him. The remnant of the rebels, who were still fascinated by the name of Demetrius, took an oath of fidelity to the child that Marina, the widow of two impostors, carried in her womb, and which was on the eve of its birth. The misfortunes of Russia seemed irreparable. Sweden, seeing the hour approach when its spoils were to be divided, became one of the competitors for the expected plunder, and Sigismund seemed to favour the dismemberment; but the insolent tyranny of the Poles had reached to such a pitch, that they were all massacred the day before Palm Sunday.

Liapounof, one of the principal promoters of the revolution which had overthrown Chouiski, endeavoured to remedy the evils which he had chiefly created, by organising a confederation of Russian towns to expel the Poles. He was obliged to have recourse to the Cossacks to form an army; but their chief, Zaloutski, a devoted partisan of Marina, permitting his troops to turn brigands, soon ceased to co-operate with the other generals. He

assassinated Liapounof, and the plot failed. On the other hand, Pontus of Gardia seized Novgorod for the king of Sweden, Charles IX. The capture of this town was attended by a circumstance worthy of remark : while the military chiefs basely deserted their posts to pillage the shops of the merchants, a priest, the curate of St. Sophia, shutting himself up in a house with a handful of brave citizens, heroically fought the Swedes.

1612. During this conjuncture, another impostor made his appearance. He also was a deacon of a convent at Moscow, and named Sidor. By the favour of a personal resemblance, true or false, he pretended to be the same Demetrius who had escaped from the snares of Godounof, the conspiracy of Chouiski, and the attempt of Ouroussof. We know not whether to be most astonished at the audacity which the fate of former impostors could not alarm, or at the credulity of a people duped three or four times by the same fable. Sidor, conducted to Pleskof, was acknowledged, and received the oaths of the people ; but at the end of a few days, treated as an impostor, he was led to a field and hanged amidst popular acclamation.

In this deplorable state, Russia owed its safety to one of its obscurest sons. A butcher, named Kosma Minin, rekindled in the souls of the citizens the flame of patriotism, and induced them to make every possible sacrifice for the common defence and safety. Such examples are not rare in revolutions ; but whether a butcher or a fishmonger spring from their humble stalls to the leadership of the people, they must be endowed with extraordinary talents and courage. The Russians, re-animated by the voice of this man, sought Pojarski, a brave warrior, who had shed his blood in fighting for them.* Appointed to the chief command, Pojarski saw the number of his troops rapidly increase, and public affairs soon presented a new aspect. The Poles, defeated in several encounters, were besieged in Moscow, where they suffered the horrors of

* The Emperor Alexander built a fine monument to the memory of Minin and Pojarski at Moscow. J. D.

famine. Sigismund withdrew; and the garrison of the capital having surrendered, the state was delivered from foreigners.

Zaloutski, the protector of Marina, who finished with her the career of her prostitutions, obliged to abandon his camp at the approach of Pojarski, went with Marina and her son to ravage the principality of Riason; he burnt all the undefended towns. Finally, this brigand was captured on the banks of the Oural, and conducted to Moscow with Marina and her son. He was impaled; the son of Marina, only three years old, was hanged; his mother, who belonged to the first houses in Poland, was treated with more gentleness, and only condemned to prison; but she did not long survive.

After having delivered their country, Pojarski and the generous citizens who had aided his labours, wishing to consolidate their work by internal pacification, went to the monastery of Kostroma, and there found, still under the maternal wing, Michael Feorodowitch Sourief, otherwise called Michael Romanow, son of Fedor Nikitich, whom Boris made a monk, and who was then a prisoner at Warsaw.

During the last troubles that we have traced, Russia had fallen into such a state of weakness, that her neighbours, vying with each other in trampling down her territory, occupying her towns and tyrannising over her citizens, had even begun to deliberate the problem of her political existence or extinction. Each claimed permanent possession of its conquests: Poland had regained Smolensko; Sweden Novgorod, Ingria, and Kexholm. The relations of commerce recently opened with Persia were suspended, and in all the channels of prosperity movement and life had been arrested. From the bosom of these calamities Russia is about to spring forth anew, and command the respect and excite the fears of northern Europe; awaiting a reign in which her banners, advancing from the south, were destined to float over the other opposite bank of the Caspian Sea.

FIFTH EPOCH.

DYNASTY OF ROMANOW, AND RESTORATION OF RUSSIA: FROM 1613 to 1687.

THE states assembled at Moscow, who raised to the throne the son of the Metropolitan of Rostof, were, according to usage, composed of the different orders of the nation ; that is to say, the boyars and officers attached to the family of the prince, the voivodes, the nobles, and the sons of the boyars of towns, the merchants, burgesses, and proprietors of immovable property.

Michael Romanow was only sixteen years of age. Incapable of holding the helm of the state in his feeble hand, especially when the tempest roared, he was indebted for the preference he had received to the virtues of his father, and to the necessity of making some choice to arrest competing ambitions, without wholly closing the door against their future aspirations. After having endured so much tyranny, the exhausted Russians appealed to the ingenuousness of a youthful monarch to shield them against oppression. They, however, deceived themselves, as presently will be seen ; and, moreover, they might have made a selection more in accordance with their worship of legitimate races. That of Rourik was not extinct ; and although time had destroyed the trunk, some severed branches might still have been found among illustrious families. Strictly speaking, the election of Romanow must be considered, if not an usurpation, at least a violation of the principles on which the useful fiction of legitimacy reposes ; but it seems that at bottom the Russians paid more respect to power *de facto* and to dazzling achievements, than to power *de jure* and an ancient nobility, which is the preference of an enslaved people.

Michael was not even of Russian descent; his forefathers were Prussians established in Russia since the fourteenth century. Those historians who have represented Romanow as a strayed offshoot of the great dynasty, have advanced an imposture to flatter the reigning family.* The same writers have seen in an inexperienced youth a consummate sage, who accepted supreme power with trembling reluctance, so deeply was he impressed with the arduous duties of royalty!

The burden was, in fact, heavy for him; he had to repel the attacks of Sweden and Poland, and prevent or sustain the sudden attacks of the Cossacks and Tatars. The Swedes remained masters of Novgorod. In 1612, Gustavus Adolphus had led his son Charles Philip to the steps of the throne of the Czars; but the Russians soon perceived that his object was not to give them a king, but to aggrandise Sweden. The election of Romanow did not extinguish this desire in the soul of Gustavus; a youth of sixteen seemed to be a slight obstacle in his path. He rejected every proposal of peace made by the young prince. Against this powerful enemy Romanow implored the assistance or mediation of Great Britain, France, and Holland. Gustavus was inflexible, continued the war, took Pleskof, and only laid down his arms after the treaty of Stolbowa.† By that treaty Russia gave up to Sweden Carelia, Ingria, and several other important places, among which were Novgorod and Narva, renounced all pretensions to Livonia, and paid a sum of 200,000 roubles. It was still necessary to come to an understanding with Poland. The crown of the Czars had been promised to more than one pretender; and on that ground Vladislav, son of Sigismund, claimed compensation for his disappointed hopes, and did so at the head of an army almost

* This is important. Eichhorn is among the number. "There was no nearer relation to the house of Rourik," he remarks, "to elect. His grandfather, Nikita, was brother-in-law to Ivan Vassilievitch the Second, and consequently uncle to the Czar Fedor the First, with whom the male line of Rourik expired."

† Levesque fixes this treaty in 1616.

under the gates of Moscow. It was a matter of urgency to purchase the tranquillity of the country devastated by soldiers. The Czar resigned himself to new sacrifices ; and, by a fresh treaty, surrendered Smolensko, Severia or Seversk, and Tchernigof to Poland. At this price he obtained the liberty of his father, who had been a prisoner in Poland from the date of the embassy that Chouiski had sent to demand satisfaction in the cases of the false Demetriuses, whom the Palatines had supported against his authority. The throne had not totally corrupted Romanow, and he associated the name of his father with his own in the acts of government.

External peace having been established, Romanow applied himself to promote the oft-interrupted commerce with the East, and despatched ambassadors to Persia and China. The principal object of their negotiations was the trade in silk, and other principal commodities ; the privation of which rendered Russia tributary to the nations of the north, who already fabricated them with great success.

The death of Sigismund was the signal for renewed hostilities with Poland. The Russians regretted concessions extorted from them by necessity. Moreover, the period was opportune, Sweden being then in open rupture against Poland ; but the campaign opened under disastrous auspices. Discord broke out among the Russian generals under the ramparts of Smolensko ; the soldiers mutinied ; and soon surrounded by those whom they came to besiege, they were compelled to sign a dishonourable capitulation. (1634.) The consequence of this check was the peace of Viasma, which confirmed in favour of Poland the stipulations of former treaties ; and, in addition, a formal renunciation by Russia of all pretensions to Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland. By way of compensation, Vladislav abandoned his rights to the throne of Russia, and agreed to recognise the legitimacy of Romanow. Finally, the latter negotiated with the Porte, and accepted its mediation with the Khan of the Crimea, with the view of obtaining indemnities or satisfac-

tion for his last incursions into the Russian territory. There terminated the ambitious wishes and the military exploits of Michael Romanow. Dying, he left no quarrels to his son; and his rule was regretted because he loved peace, or at least he had learned to be disgusted with war, without running the hazard of too-fatal lessons.

Amidst the oscillations of a stormy reign, Alexis, son of Michael, followed out steadily and successfully the restorative plans of his father. He opened new roads to commerce, established manufactures, formed the nucleus of a mercantile marine, invited foreigners into his kingdom, and gave the first impulse to the working of considerable mines in iron and copper, which are found in various parts of Russia. The art of constructing vessels was then in its infancy, and Dutch shipwrights introduced some improvements; in anticipation of the period when Peter the First, working, axe in hand, in the building-yards of Sardam, was to advance those early conquests of industry. It was under the reign of Alexis that the eastern extremities of the Russian empire, forming a part of Asia, were first explored. It would be curious to follow the track of those first Russian navigators on the seas of Kamtschatka and China; but the viscissitudes of the throne recall us to Moscow.

Alexis was but a youth when he was called to the throne; and the boyar Morozoff, his preceptor, having become prime minister, exercised sovereign authority in the name of the Czar. This man pushed the abuses of power to such an extreme, as to exhaust the patience of even this much-enduring people, and their vengeance was terrible. After having sacrificed to their seditious fury all the relations and friends of Morozoff, all who passed for accomplices in his shameless malversation; after having thrown into the flames images consecrated to piety, and sated their rage even on the horses of the minister,—the people of Moscow besieged the palace of the prince. The Czar implored the mob to spare Morozoff; however, he would in vain have lowered the majesty of the throne even to abject supplications before the multitude reeking with blood, had he not given up to them two or three

other noblemen. They were torn to pieces, and Morozoff was permitted to continue his functions ; but the people had acquired a taste for sedition and blood : new troubles arose, and insurrection spread through different parts of the empire.

The Swedish peasants had abandoned their country, to escape the maternal yoke of the learned Christina, flattering themselves with the hope of finding a happier lot in Russia ; the Czar Alexis received them graciously, encouraged and favoured their emigration. The queen of Sweden demanded a compensation for this violation of the rights of sovereigns ; and the Czar, not sufficiently assured of the loyalty of his own subjects to risk a war, consented to pay a tribute in money and corn. The people, alarmed at the export of grain, and menaced with famine, imputed again to Morozoff their present sufferings and those which they dreaded ; in all who were noble or rich they saw a criminal, and were guilty of the greatest excesses against the metropolitan of Novgorod, the celebrated Nikon, one of the annalists of Russia. The conduct of that prelate, while the revolt raged most fiercely, and his magnanimity when it was subdued, were worthy of a Christian, a saint, and a hero.

The chiefs of insurrection had proposed to dethrone the Czar, and give the crown to the king of Poland. Afterwards (when Alexis had completely strengthened himself, when he had taken several towns from the republic, and the Zaporoghian Cossacks were given up to him), on witnessing the unhappy reign of Casimir, he conceived in his turn the hope of uniting Poland to his sceptre. For centuries these rival powers had endeavoured to strangle each other ; and finally Russia achieved that triumph. But perhaps it was only a difference in religion which prevented the Polish race from ascending the throne of the Czars. It was chiefly on account of their belonging to the Church of Rome that the Poles were detested by the Russian people.

The Cossacks (named Zaporoghian, or more correctly Zaporisti, a word which signifies living beyond the rocks or sands of the

seas), were Russians who had sought an asylum near the cataracts of the Dneiper in 1471, at the time when King Casimir, of the race of the Jagellons, reunited the principality of Kief to the crown of Poland. These emigrants from Little Russia took the Tatar name of Cossacks, which denotes a man lightly armed, either because they adopted the modes of living and fighting common to the Tatar hordes, or because they had among them several Tatar Cossacks, fleeing like themselves from the yoke of the Lithuanians. However this may be, the kings of Poland derived great advantages from this horde, whilst they did not oppress them. Stephen Battori organised them into six regiments of one thousand men each, commanded by a general officer, with the title of hetman or ataman, which was also the title of the Polish generals. These troops received neither pay nor subsidy, making war absolutely at their own expense, contenting themselves at the end of a campaign with some trifling gratification in money or in furred robes.

The successors of Battori did not treat the Cossacks with the paternal benevolence which distinguished his conduct. Abandoned to the tyrannical caprices of the Palatines, from day to day they lost their privileges, and even the shadow of that liberty for which they had made every sacrifice. Sigismund the Third prohibited them from making incursions on the Turks; this was to attack their means of existence. Finally, they wished to convert them to the Latin ritual; they were beset by Romish priests, and a council of Polish bishops decided on the liberty of their consciences. Then it was that the Cossacks revolted. The war which they sustained against their oppressors was long, and varied in its chances; sometimes conquered, they were never wholly subjugated or converted. To be victorious, and make Poland tremble in its turn, they only needed a skilful leader. That leader they found in the person of their ataman Khmelnitski; and it was he who persuaded them to seek the protection of Alexis. Then war broke out anew between the two powers. Poland had

the worst of it; and, after the loss of several towns, saw itself constrained to conclude a peace for thirteen years. This truce, signed in the neighbourhood of Smolensko, stipulated the definitive re-annexation of the towns conquered from Russia—Smolensko, Polotsk, Mohilef, and Kief; and also the abandonment of part of the Ukraine and Severia.*

The war against Sweden was less fortunate; and Alexis, in spite of all his efforts, succumbed to the ascendancy of the astonishing military fortune of Charles Gustavus, whose splendour eclipsed Russia. He commenced, however, by seizing the towns of Dorpat and Narva; but was totally defeated before Riga, and after having lost a considerable number of troops, he was compelled to raise the siege. His object was to reconquer the countries severed from Russia by the last treaties, that is to say, Carelia, Ingria, and Livonia. A pestilence, which travelled over the north at that time, drove him from the last province. Finally, an armistice, and soon a peace based on the conditions of that of Stolbowa, maintained the *status quo* between the two powers.†

At the moment the Czar had made peace with foreign powers, a brigand desolated the eastern provinces of his empire. Stenka Razin was a Cossack of the Don, who commenced as many famous conquerors have commenced. Endowed with prodigious audacity, he only wanted a little more prudence, or a little more luck, to have become a Tamerlane or a Gengis Khan. He was made prisoner, taken to Moscow, and released, because he had only surrendered on the condition of being pardoned. Returning free to the banks of the Don, he renewed his brigandage, seized Astracan, which he filled with murder and desolation; then, reascending the Volga, he proclaimed his intention of besieging Moscow, and of making it the tomb of nobles, boyars, priests, and soldiers, all accomplices in the tyranny and oppression of the people. But the

* This was called the Truce of Andrussow. It was signed in 1667. Tchernigoff was also surrendered to Russia by Poland. J. D.

† The Peace of Kardis. 1661. J. D.

Russian generals Boriatinski and Dolgoroucki delivered Russia from this frightful liberator. Beaten and made prisoner a second time, he was quartered, and his brother was hanged.

Alexis enjoyed profound peace during the remainder of his reign. He died in 1676. He was twice married; and Fedor, son of his first marriage, was appointed his successor.

That monarch was not tainted with the cruel ferocity common to the majority of his predecessors, and the greater number of historians have praised the gentleness of his character. However, he created the secret chancery; a species of state inquisition which subserved all the terrors and whims of despotism, while screening the despot from the outward appearances of odious brutality. As political societies advance, there arrives a point where ferocity passes from individuals into associations.* The honour of amending and codifying Russian jurisprudence in a digest which still exists, as a useful monument, under the name of *Ulojenie*, belongs to this prince. But the debasement of the coin, to which expedient he had recourse after the war with Poland and Sweden, was not creditable to a legislator. It aggravated the wretchedness of the people, already extreme; despair counselled sedition; it was terrible; torrents of blood were shed; and it was probably with a view to prevent the recurrence of such disorders that the secret chancery was established. At the same time the Czar adopted a more efficacious measure; he called in the debased money which had destroyed credit.

Fedor, the eldest of the sons of Alexis, succeeded him at the age of nineteen. He began his reign by making war against the Turks with some success; but the peace concluded in 1681 enabled that prince to devote his time to legislative reforms, which were more glorious victories. To him belongs the honour of abolishing hereditary titles; the effect of which was, both in the

* Karamsin asserts that it was not established till the reign of Peter the First, and that Alexis only appointed a private chancery to regulate the business of the crown lands.

military and civil service, to give an absolute superiority to him who could prove that at some former period one of his ancestors had held a high appointment. Such a man took precedence of another who could give no such proof, although the latter might be more illustrious by birth; for antiquity of race was deemed inferior to the performance of public services.

The evils produced by aristocratic abuses must have been great, when at such an epoch a remedy was deemed imperative. For instance, it must have been a monstrous evil to deprive the nation of the services of an able general, because there happened to be in the army some persons without talents or experience, but who had held high posts under some former government. Such a mode of interpreting the privilege of birth perverted all its good effects. Eternal punctilios took place among persons in the same department of the state, in the same rank, in the same family; and these puerile disputes often sacrificed all the advantages that might otherwise have been derived from a campaign. During peace, there was not a festival or a ceremony at which some nobleman did not present a petition, praying that some other nobleman might not be placed on an equality with himself.

To accomplish the useful object he had in view, the Czar did not think it prudent to exercise his absolute power without some mixture of tact, for privileges were very dear to those who possessed them. He ordered all the parchments or registers in which the gradations of rank were verified, to be brought to the palace, under the pretext of correcting errors and giving a new sanction to the amended documents. Then, having convoked an assembly, consisting of the patriarch, the higher clergy, and all the officers of the crown, he decided on burning all the heraldic muniments in presence of their owners, who applauded while they shuddered. What is very remarkable in this extraordinary *coup d'état*, the Czar and the patriarch, in the speeches each delivered, to demonstrate the utility and necessity of the abrogation, based all their arguments on texts of the Bible. "It is God," exclaimed

the patriarch, addressing the prince, “ who blesses this august ceremony, and strengthens you for its performance.”

Fedor protected the sciences, and, imitating the policy of his father, endeavoured to polish the barbarous rudeness of his nation ; but the methods he adopted to ensure success attested rather his good inclinations than his judgment. In the rules he laid down for the government of the academy he was desirous of founding, it was enacted that every deviation from the principles established, or the doctrines to be taught, should be punished rigorously by burning the offender. The introduction of the maxims of the Latin Church was most dreaded ; one evil was created to avert another. But this literary inquisition, advised by some fanatic monk, rendered no service to science, produced nothing, and probably had no other existence than in the edict for its institution. It was too impracticable, it too rudely shocked the spirit of investigation and of progress, which should be the vital principle of all learned societies.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE RUSSIANS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The writer who has most frequently served us as a guide up to this epoch, pauses at the close of the seventeenth century to glance at the manners of a people whose political vicissitudes he has traced during that period. Nothing is more philosophical or more useful than the comparative pictures of the civil practices of a nation from one age to another ; for it is much more in these details than in the narrative of the catastrophes of the throne that the history of communities is to be found ; it is through these civil practices that they approximate to or touch each other, and that their annals interest posterity. The displacements and revolutions of power are but the travelling baggage of history. The pictures of the progress of social organisation and of the development of reason, if any progression takes place, are its soul. Let us see then, after M. Levesque, what was the state of the Russian nation

at the moment when Peter the Great ascended the throne ; that is to say, at the moment when, according to a very erroneous but very widely-circulated opinion, the true history of Russia commences. This will be the last loan we shall borrow from that sage writer. He also could not emancipate himself from the influence which seems to have ruled paramount over all the French authors of the eighteenth century who treated of the history of Russia. It was during the brilliant reign of Catherine, and in her capital, that M. Levesque went to search for his materials ; his eyes were fascinated by the halo of glory with which that sovereign was surrounded : and in reference to M. Levesque, as well as to Voltaire, the illusion spread to the reign of Peter the Great ; for the sceptre of Catherine the Second, surnamed the Semiramis of the North, like the wand of Armida, was capable in an instant of metamorphosing places, things, and men, and of constructing smiling gardens on frightful abysses. Now that the source of these monarchical enchantments is destroyed, we may distinguish the truth, and we ought to declare it.

In the seventeenth century political and civil society had reached to nearly the same point among all the European nations. There was a sort of uniformity in their manners and customs. In the sixteenth century it was Spain that set the fashion ; now France had its turn ; but Russia was still without the pale of these communications. At this epoch, the clerical aristocracy seemed to have lost nothing of its ancient influence. Thus the bishops and the metropolitans were always the first consulted in temporal affairs ; for that reason it was that the patriarch is always the first named in public deliberations. The respect inspired by the holiness of his ministry rendered him, in some sort, the equal of his sovereign ; not that he had in fact any temporal authority in the state, but because, in the councils, the veneration felt for his spiritual authority gave the greatest weight to his opinion. However, these priests, these monks, apt at counselling and directing public affairs, were in no respect fitted to

enlighten the people, and resumed in spiritual affairs the narrow and superstitious spirit of their profession. External acts, signs of the cross, genuflexions, the rigorous observance of Lent, composed the whole religion of the Russians ; and it was only by these practices that they were distinguished as Christians from the hordes of the empire, the most devoid of all ideas of spirituality. Many Russians still live in the same ignorance and in the same superstitions. Enslaved and ignorant people hate those who do not share their superstitions. The Russians detested the Europeans. One of the joyous shouts with which they saluted their princes at their accession, was to demand the massacre of foreigners. They called the Latins atheists, *hezbojni*. But at least they had not that sort of barbarism which consists in confining for life in a cloister young girls, who as yet do not know their own minds, and who, less called than constrained or seduced, allow themselves to be immolated, without knowing the price of the sacrifice of which they are the victims. Almost all the Russian nuns were widows, or women separated from their husbands or convicted of adultery. The priests had not the right of preaching ; some, indeed, were sent to Siberia for exercising that privilege. Preaching still is less frequent in the Russian Church than in other communions. The Russians used to say, with much good sense, that the Church is founded on the Word of God consigned in the Scriptures, and that the interpretations of theologians and preachers had been the source of all the quarrels which had divided the Christians.

Under the Czar Alexis almost all the houses in the capital were still of wood, as in the preceding age. The walls were bare ; it was a great luxury to cover them with hides from Flanders, as also to have other beds than bare planks, and to repose on linen or down. The Russians in general were badly clothed ; but in the ceremonies, in the festivals of the court, on occasions of display, these men, usually so negligent, exhibited Asiatic luxury ; gold and diamonds ornamented the richness of the most precious stuffs and the most costly furs. Those who could not dress them-

selves in a style suitable to their circumstances hired robes, pelisses, hats, gold chains, scymiters, from the wardrobe of the Czar. It was there that they borrowed, at the price of money, their decorations for marriage and festival days, and even for their embassies. If they lost or damaged any article, they made compensation, and were beaten as a punishment for their negligence; for neither rank nor birth were exempted from fustigation. Notwithstanding the splendour with which the court still shone, and which still dazzled strangers, it had lost the immense riches which it had enjoyed down to the reign of Boris. Treasures amassed during so many centuries, acquired by commerce or purchased with blood, had become the prey of enemies, who had torn the state asunder during the last troubles. We may judge of this by a single feature in the immense booty made by the Poles: in the principal church of Moscow they pillaged the statues of Jesus Christ and the twelve Apostles, as large as life, and cast in gold,—a great number of silver-gilt tables, ornaments, vases enriched with pearls and diamonds. The treasure of the Czars was carried away, dispersed, distributed to soldiers, to whom no pay could be given. Russia, under the last princes of the epoch that we have just described, offers no more than the brilliant fragments of its ancient opulence.

Women of distinction, still subjected to the austerity of oriental manners, nevertheless were under some less restraint than formerly; they might quit their houses to go to church or to visit their nearest relations. But in all classes they continued subject to the rigorous and absolute authority of their husbands. The father, the mother of a wife, though present, could not prevent her husband from beating her, or rather from scourging her before their eyes, and that without any cause. He only exercised his *rights*; and it would have been a grave offence to have offered resistance. The author of the *Persian Letters* says, that the Russian women were pleased with being beaten; and what has the appearance of raillery is a true remark, the exactitude of



WEST SIDE OF THE KREMLIN, MOSCOW.

which is justified by one of their proverbs, which proves the existence of this general custom among the people: *Biou kak choulou, i loulou kak douchou* (I beat you as I do my pelisse, and I love you as my heart). Finally, it is known that the Semiramis of the North, queen though she was, showed herself a complete Russian in this respect; it is known that the indomitable Catherine allowed herself to be beaten by her lovers, and that she felt more than once the weight of the arm of an Orlof and a Potemkin. The wives of the people, less rigorously secluded than those of the nobles, often found pretexts for leaving their homes, abandoned themselves to fondness for strong liquors, and from their drunkenness arose a disgusting and bestialised libertinism.

An excessive ignorance rendered the Russians of those days very proud. Their sovereigns, their nobles, were imbued with some of that spirit of boasting so amusing in the Grand Khan of the Tatars of the Gilded Horde, their ancient master, who, after having torn with his nails the half-cooked meat which composed his repast, announced by sound of trumpet, before his door, that all the princes and potentates of the earth might seat themselves at table, he having dined. The Russian ambassadors displayed extreme obstinacy in all questions of ceremony and etiquette. The government carried this haughtiness to a great extent. From the date even of the administration of Sophia, the boyars and men in place did not dare to hold any communication with foreigners. If they wished to converse with them, they always chose the night for their interviews. It may be inferred that the police was for a long time neglected. There was no safety during the night in the capital, and the roads were infested with brigands. The misery, the idleness of the people, and the harshness of their masters, multiplied their numbers. It seems that the use of poisons was then common, and enchantment was much dreaded. All who nearly approached the prince were sworn not to mix up any dangerous herbs in the food of the Czar, and to prevent others from so doing.

We have seen that the first Czar, Ivan, formed a permanent infantry, under the name of Strelitz, and gave them fire-arms. That famous militia became corrupted in times of trouble, committed brigandage, shook off discipline, and became formidable only to their masters. Michael (Mikail) had German cavalry; he raised regiments of dragoons. To conquer his neighbours, he imitated them. Alexis introduced still greater changes in the military art. He diminished the number of cavalry, and almost all the superior officers were Germans. The armies were composed of hussars armed with lances, afterwards called lancers, of horsemen carrying fire-arms, and dragoons with long muskets. The militia, composed of peasants and the populace of towns, were called soldiers. They were armed with swords and muskets, and divided into regiments, under the command of officers, mostly foreigners. The troops of Kasan, of Astrakan, and Siberia were on horseback, and used the bow. The same accoutrements were given to the army of the Nogais, the Bashkirs, and the Calmucks, a great number of whom always formed part of the military force. The Cossacks had fire-arms and lances. The Moscow district always kept on foot forty thousand Strelitz, without reckoning the other towns. One-third was allotted to the guards of the Czar; the others were distributed in various places. They were divided into several regiments; their chiefs had lands, of which the Czar gave them temporary possession. Each year they received presents in clothing and money. The Dvorian, and children of boyars of towns, used the bow or musket at their pleasure. Officers who distinguished themselves by their valour, and by the importance of their services, were presented to the Czar; they received pieces of woollen cloth, silk stuffs, rich furs, gold vases, promotion in the service, lands, and sometimes the prince admitted them to his table. He made presents to the wives of those killed in battle.

All affairs were decided in the Council of the Senate: it was composed of boyars, anciently called *boliaré*, which corresponds

with the Latin words *majores*, *primores*: it was the first class of nobility; of the *Okolnitchié*, a title denoting those who surrounded the person of the prince; of the *Doumnié-Dvoriané*, or nobles of the council; and of the *Doumnié-Diaki*, or secretaries of the council. The form was, *Boiare prigovorili, i Czar prikazal* (the boyars are of opinion, and the Czar has ordered): thus the prince only ordered the execution of what the magistrates had resolved upon. However, this must be considered merely as an empty form; since the most absolute power, the most complete despotism, had been established since the expulsion of the Tatars. Despotism sometimes likes to see itself surrounded with the lifeless ruins, the inanimate relics of the ancient liberty which it has destroyed, and to which it has succeeded. The people accept the shadow for the substance, and are duped into servitude. If we may believe Mayerberg, the council only served to avert from the person of the prince whatever odium the edicts might excite; thus the prudent fiction of the impeccability of the monarch was admitted: but the responsibility of his agents at least was not chimerical; for we have seen the Czars throw some heads over the wall to the people, when, axe and torch in hand, they menaced the gates of the palace. All the magistrates were obliged to serve in the army; it was usually a boiarin of the senate who commanded in chief. Officers of the council and the household had the government of towns, and were sent on embassies. There was no marked line of demarcation between civil and military offices; men passed from one to the other: this supposes an excellent or detestable administration; a legislation simple, clear, precise,—or a horrible and pernicious confusion. When the Czar resolved on war, he repaired to the principal church, and caused a secretary of state to read aloud his complaints against his enemy, and the reasons which obliged him to demand vengeance; thus the sovereign still thought himself bound to render to his people some account of his acts, and sought some reasons for demanding their blood. It would seem, from this usage, that the

Russians, rather led than commanded by their monarch; enjoyed liberty. It is true, however, that the sovereign reigned with the most absolute despotism. Not only the people, *formerly* free, were attached to the servitude of the soil; but the nobles, even the princes, whose ancestors had been sovereigns; at the least sign from the despot, were scourged with whips and murdered with clubs. Foreigners who entered the service of Russia were subject to the same treatment as the natives, and medical men were more exposed to it than others. How could the Russians have been reduced to such a low state of slavery and humiliation? By the ascendancy gained by the successors of Dmitri Donski, and especially by the sanguinary tyranny of the first Czar, Ivan Vassilievitch.

IVAN THE FIFTH, ALEXIEVITCH, AND PETER THE FIRST, HIS BROTHER.

1682. At the death of Fedor, the suffrages of the nation were divided between the two princes his brothers. Ivan was called to the throne by the right of primogeniture; but extreme feebleness of mind and body caused him to be regarded as incapable of governing. The nobility and clergy united their wishes in favour of Peter, born of the second wife of Alexis. However, the tender age of that prince seemed to render supreme authority as illusory in his hands as in those of his brother. Nothing as yet revealed in him one of those men who have a precocity for command; and the preference was only given to his mother. This young princess, Natalie Nariskin, grand-daughter of Nariskin, minister under the two preceding reigns, found in Sophia, daughter of the first marriage of Alexis, her husband, a dangerous rival. The latter, to whom a more mature age had given experience, joined to the peculiar advantages of her sex a firm character, a genius active and ambitious; finally, although a woman and young, she did not feel herself unequal to the weight of power. She had not

seen without indignation her brother Ivan stripped of his rights to the throne. That feeling, which it must be admitted was excusable, led to a project which nothing can justify; for it is vain to assert her innocent of the revolt of the Strelitz. These turbulent and fierce pretorians served Sophia, even beyond her expectations, in her hatred of the mother of Peter and the whole family of that princess. A report was circulated that the prince Ivan had been assassinated by the Nariskins. Moscow was immediately filled with seditious clamours. The Strelitz, inflaming the tumult they had raised, assembled with fury, marched, and dragged pieces of artillery in front of the Kremlin. In vain did the prince, whose death they pretended to avenge, present himself before them by the side of his brother; their rage was only satiated when they had destroyed all who bore the name of Nariskin, and massacred a sufficient number of nobles and boyars to accumulate an immense booty. However, as they had only shed so much blood in the names of the young Ivan and his brother, they proclaimed Ivan Czar with his brother Peter, and confided to Sophia the reins of government: that was the object of all her wishes. They received a new chief from the hand of that grateful princess; and their audacity, emboldened by success and favour, induced them to constitute themselves judges of those whom they had assassinated without a hearing. They erected monuments; on them they inscribed the names and imaginary crimes of their victims. But their authority soon rendered them formidable even to those whom they had served. Sophia feared them for a moment, and their ruin was sworn. Secretly accused of conspiracy against the Czar and the nobles, their chief Kovanski (1684), who owed his elevation to Sophia, perished with the principal officers of the Strelitz. His crime was merely conjectural; but he was pursued by the jealousy of a rival who knew how to strike him opportunely. Whilst at home, Sophia and her minister, Golitzin, whose tact had greatly influenced the reforms effected under the reign of Fedor, thus

triumphed over rebellion, they secured to the empire foreign consideration. Leopold, always inquieted by the Turks, whom the valour of Sobieski had chased from before the walls of Vienna, sought against them the support of his neighbours. Although the Turks appear to be the natural enemies of the Russians, they took advantage of the situation of the emperor to put a price on the rupture of the treaty which, for twenty years, had subsisted between them. That price was to ensure the possession of countries over which Poland retained pretensions. A treaty was concluded between the two countries on the 6th of May, 1686. By it the czars were recognised as perpetual sovereigns of Kief, Tchernigof, and Smolensko. Thus all the country situate between Tchernigof and Novgorod-Severski to Little Russia, inclusively, was assured to them. Another of its principal clauses was the offensive and defensive alliance of Russia with the court of Vienna, Poland, and the republic of Venice, against the Turks. However, curbed on one side by Sweden, and on the other always insolently provoked by the Tatars of the Crimea, Russia anticipated the greatest advantages from the administration of Golitzin; he was not insensible to the call of national honour, and marched personally into the Crimea, at the head of a formidable army. The Tatars disappointed his hopes by setting fire to their steppes. This expedition was only remarkable by the foolish scheme of building, in the midst of the deserts, on the banks of the Samara, a town which was to serve as a magazine and rampart for the next campaign. But such monuments should rather be erected to attest and guarantee conquests than to prepare them. Leading back with difficulty the remnant of an army which hunger, thirst, want of order and discipline, had rapidly destroyed, Golitzin was, nevertheless, received by his sovereign with all the honours due to a conqueror. The contempt and hatred which the young Peter had long vowed against this minister broke forth more violently than ever. He and his friends unreservedly poured sarcasm and irony on his

equivocal honours. Sophia and Golitzin determined on his destruction (1687), which they thought had been too long deferred; they drew into their scheme many officers of the Strelitz. Peter was compelled, at the first rumbling of the storm, to retire to the convent of the Trinity. In revolutions it was the usual asylum of the Russian princes, whom it guaranteed, not by the respect attached to the sacredness of its walls, but by their imposing force, and the terror of a formidable artillery. There he assembled all those young nobles whom he had attached to his person, by sharing with them an intimate conformity of habits, and still more by disclosing the perspective, flattering to youthful minds, of a reign which would be fertile in great changes. He called to him some chiefs of the Strelitz who had remained faithful to his cause, arrested the blow impending over his head (1689), intimidated revolt, persuaded, cruelly punished the guilty, but spared the lives of the princess his sister and her minister. Instead of capital punishment, she underwent the rigours of perpetual imprisonment; and her favourite, the horrors of exile into the most distant and least habitable part of the empire. The ambitious and revengeful soul of this princess was not subdued; at least she did not escape the suspicion of having planned fresh plots after her seclusion, and of having, from the depths of her retreat, fomented the last revolt of the Strelitz.

SIXTH EPOCH.

PROGRESS OF RUSSIA AS AN INFLUENTIAL POWER IN EUROPE, FROM 1689 TO 1801.

IF a happy direction of our earliest impulses and passions can alone implant in men, especially in men destined to wear a crown, that character of goodness and those ideas of justice which are very rarely the gift of nature, Peter the First, in common with the majority of his ancestors, could not fail to become an inhuman and savage despot. Abandoned to the unrestrained recklessness of an impetuous temperament, his only guides and teachers were foreign adventurers, whom the desire of acquiring wealth, bad conduct in their own country, or dishonourable accidents, had thrown upon the soil of Russia. But an unlimited ambition, sustained by rare activity of mind, in pushing forward this monarch to enterprises of which the glory and prosperity of his people were the pretexts, sowed some useful seeds, and reflected a shadow of glory on a life too much stained with crime. He thus secured the suffrage of a school of philosophy, generous in its views undoubtedly, but which, from hatred of the past, lauded too blindly countries and princes which were marching with giant strides towards the future. Moreover, Voltaire and his disciples thought it their duty to praise those potentates who took counsel from their wisdom. Unfortunately, neither party were truthful nor honest.

The choice of means should first be considered in all reforms ; and that, more than success, constitutes the shame or the glory of the reformer. Now, Peter the First was not in his country the Gaulish Hercules whose powerful speech created golden chains,

the emblem of persuasive strength ; he was the ferocious Procrustes, who mercilessly cut men down to the dimensions of his iron bed. Against the customs and prejudices of his country, the most trivial in their nature, the most indifferent in their object, he armed himself with every description of punishment, struggled furiously against paltry obstacles ; and while desirous of anticipating time, by substituting the axe and the wheel for the slow but certain results of imitative instinct, he only obtained, instead of the real advantages of civilisation, that varnish of politeness and those semblances of prosperity which float over the most deplorable corruption. The Russian nation has passed, at a bound, from infancy to caducity ; she has never enjoyed either political or civil liberty, for those two ages of a people have need of chains. The intermediate age, which represents the epoch of maturity and vigour, is alone capable of virtue and liberty.

Of all the foreigners who flocked to Moscow, and whose intimacy was courted by the young prince, Lefort and Gordon* were almost the only ones who did not recommend themselves by their vices, though the former is treated as a gentlemanly sharper by writers whose habitual indulgence is excessive.† They were the only two who continued in favour after that first period, in which nothing more was required than to humour the passions and satisfy the caprice and recklessness of a youth. However, the same men whose intercourse had perhaps corrupted him, awoke in his soul the desire for instruction. In listening to them, he understood that other nations were superior to his own ; he particularly desired to have an army, and to be himself a soldier. His body was robust, his activity restless, his obstinacy invincible.

In the castle of Preobajenski, where the jealous watchfulness of Sophia had long confined him, he was surrounded by some fifty young men, who were the sons of boyars or officers of his household. They were called his “amusers.” They were masque-

* Lefort was a Swiss ; Gordon was a Scotchman. J. D.

† Elchhorn.

rated into soldiers, and clothed in the German uniform. Foreign officers commanded and instructed them. Peter, wishing to give an example of discipline, commenced by the lowest military rank, and became a drummer. The troop was gradually increased, and by the year 1690 the young Czar had formed two regiments, destined to be his body-guard. Voltaire asserts that from the date when Peter dressed and drilled his "amusers" in the German fashion, he meditated the destruction of the Strelitz. It is possible, but very improbable.

Lefort instilled into him a desire to study navigation. This was a more difficult task; for Peter had an excessive horror of the liquid element, and shuddered at the sight of a river or a lake. He triumphed, however, over this weakness, which resulted from a danger he had incurred in his youth, and he determined on having a navy. A Dutch shipwright, named Cartem Brandt, invited to Russia by the Czar Alexis, and afterwards forgotten, languished at Moscow, gaining his livelihood as he could. He was sent for; and he built a shallop, two frigates, and several yachts. Peter I., without any rank in his army, was not so modest in regard to his navy; he declared himself admiral. After having practised himself in manœuvring on Lake Ladoga, he undertook a voyage to Archangel, that he might behold ships of a large class in the open sea, and traversed the White Sea in a vessel built by Brandt. No Russian monarch or flag had ever before braved that sea. All these first essays took place during the life of the elder of the two princes; but when, through the death of Ivan, Peter became sole master, he extended his plans, and the military sports which had amused his youth became important innovations. He built on the Voroneje a considerable number of vessels; and that fleet, the first that Russia possessed, was destined to prosecute the war which Peter found commenced against the Turks.

The foreign relations of his empire also occupied his thoughts at the beginning of his reign. By a treaty signed at Nertschinsk,



MOUNT ARARAT.

in 1689, he terminated the differences which had arisen under his predecessors with China, in reference to a boundary-line. The river Kerbeschi (the Gorbitza) fixed the point of separation between the two countries. Two years afterwards his vessels floated on the Black Sea.

Of all the neighbouring powers, the Turks, then attacked in the Morea, in Hungary, and on the side of Poland, promised the easiest career to the warlike temper of Peter. He concentrated all his forces against Azof, a maritime town on the Sea of Azof, designated in antiquity under the name of the *Palus Mœotis*. Strong in its ramparts and in the bravery of its garrison, but particularly in the skill of an artillery officer, whom the fear of a punishment, not less unjust than cruel, had induced to quit the Russian for the Turkish banners,—this place, by its resistance, wore out the obstinacy of Peter, who retired after losing thirty thousand men.

1695. Vengeance and shame brought him back the following year before the walls of Azof with considerably augmented forces. He had obtained engineers and gunners from the Emperor, Holland, and the Elector of Brandenburg. His army was commanded by Chein. His fleet consisted of two vessels of war, the one commanded by the Czar, the other by Lefort, four galleys, two galliots, and four fire-ships. The operations before the place were conducted with intelligence; and for the first time the military manœuvres of Russia were subjected to regular tactics. At the end of a siege of two months the town surrendered. Then it was that Peter conceived the ambitious hope of becoming master of the Crimea, and from thence opening up an easy communication between his empire and the East. He returned full of that project; and wishing to excite the admiration of his people, whose assistance was necessary for the execution of his grand schemes, he ordered a triumphal procession. There were exhibited the spoils of his enemies and chained prisoners; but the spectators looked in vain for the chariot of the conqueror.

From an eccentricity which has been deemed worthy of praise, the prince assumed the grade which belonged to his rank in the army. He only then commanded a squadron ; having commenced, says his historian (Voltaire), in order to give a useful example of discipline, by being a drummer, afterwards a corporal. An emperor-drummer in his own armies is, perhaps, less a trait of modesty than a display of puerile vanity !

But in this triumph nothing produced so profound an impression as the preparations made for the punishment of the refugee who had so bravely defended Azof. He appeared in the procession in a chariot on which a gallows was fixed, from which he was hanged, after having been broken on the wheel.* Then, for the first time, a medal was struck in Russia, to eternise the memory of that glorious expedition. The inscription expressed these words : “ Peter I., Emperor, always august.”

Among those who had accompanied him to the conquest of Azof, he soon selected some young men whom he sent to foreign countries to study navigation ; others were ordered to instruct themselves in the military tactics of those nations who most excelled in the art ; and he himself, according to the expression of his panegyrist, resolved to pass some years away from his dominions, to learn the science of government : a resolve which certainly has few examples in history, whether it be matter of praise or blame. But in following him in this political pilgrimage, it is impossible not to confess that he often stepped out of the path of true greatness, and that he failed in his object, if his object was to instruct himself, rather than parade his pretensions to glory before Europe. In his travels, as in his triumphs for his conquest of Azof, confounded in the crowd of his followers, dressed in the simplest attire, he seemed desirous of escaping admiration, though

* This officer was named Jacob, and was by birth a German. Having taken service in Russia, he was raised to the rank of captain in the guards. Born in the Romish Church, he became a Protestant, then joined the Greek Church, and after his desertion became a Mahometan.

all his actions tended to excite it. He visited Denmark, Brandenburg, Holland, Venice, Vienna, and Rome; Spain and France were alone excluded from his itinerary. The former had no title to such condescension, on account of its ignorance; the second, because it was too conspicuous by its refinement and learning, or perhaps, adds his panegyrist, because the pride of Louis XIV., which had offended so many potentates, badly accorded with the simplicity of the traveller: however, it does not become the author of the *Age of Louis XIV.* to make such an observation.

He took his departure, after having stifled a conspiracy which originated in the discontent caused by so many innovations, and particularly in his scheme of travelling.* The regency was composed of the principal boyars. He experienced some unpleasantness in Livonia, a province coveted by his ambition. Having wished to enter the citadel of Riga, and examine the fortifications, the governor gave him a refusal; treason or imbecility would alone have made so dangerous a concession. This conduct, so natural in a commanding officer, is blamed by the great writer we have quoted.

At Königsburg, already faithless to his prescribed line of conduct, he vied in magnificence and pomp with the elector, an imprudent prince, whose prodigality and pillage ruined a poor country, which a rigid economy could alone restore. The traveling prince and the prince his entertainer spent several days in the excesses of the table: it was at one of these royal orgies that Peter, mad with drink, threw himself on his friend Lefort, to pierce him with his sword. It is said that he repented of this outbreak; and his admirers put these remarkable words in his mouth, "I wish to reform my nation, and I am unable to reform myself."

1697. He arrives at Amsterdam, and we reach the finest

* Some authors have imputed it to the Princess Sophia. "From the depths of her convent," says Eichhorn, "she organised a conspiracy among the Strelitz." The simple fact is, that the people detested the commencements of the new reign.

period in his life ; that, at least, which popular admiration has most vaunted, on the credit of some famous dispensers of glory. Enrolled in the ship-yards of Saardam among the corps of master-shipwrights, dressed as they were, living with them their laborious life, and drinking harder than they did, he learned naval architecture.* He completed with his own hands a vessel pierced for sixty guns, which he had begun single-handed, says Voltaire ; an achievement which may at least be doubted. But Voltaire has passed over in silence many other matters which are quite credible. He does not say that, in a paroxysm of rage, the Czar was ready to cut down a master-shipwright with his axe ; although he had desired all the workmen, on taking their title, and admitting them to his familiarity, to consider him as one of their companions.

The apprentice-builder was at the same time a pupil in surgery. He had consultations with the celebrated Ruysch ; and as the result of his anatomical studies he was able to draw teeth, an accomplishment worthy of a monarch. However, more than one of his courtiers was compelled to sacrifice some of their teeth, to give him the opportunity of showing his skill. His love of instruction, and his thirst for knowledge, carried him to still greater lengths. Levesque declares that, according to a tradition not yet extinct in Holland, he was inquisitive even to ferocity. The punishment of the wheel, it is said, was yet unknown to him ; and he desired to see some wretch expire under this torture. As there was no criminal in the prisons who merited this punishment, he offered one of his own slaves ; and it is added that he could not understand why the magistrates refused him that gratification.†

But the most anxious of all his cares was to collect, by every

* He had no valet, and mended his own clothes and stockings. He took the common name of Peter Mikailof. The termination "of" is peculiar to the common people, while that of "itch" designates the nobility.

† This does not accord with the punishment of the deserter Jacob. J. D.

means, a body of mechanics and artisans expert in every trade. The majority of them, seduced by his promises, consented to be transplanted into his savage territories, and were bitterly punished for their credulity. Not even the humblest complaint was permitted to those unfortunates, who perished miserably; and the knout or Siberia was the reward of those who dared to remonstrate.

After having witnessed the departure of the famous vessel he had constructed, loaded with men of all nations for Archangel, he quitted Amsterdam and went to England. He had seen King William at the Hague and at Utrecht, who sent several ships to escort him. In Holland we have seen him a shipwright, engineer, geographer, physician, operator; here we shall see him a watch-maker, astronomer; here he will pass from the benches of the University of Oxford into the workshop of the joiner and cabinet-maker, calculate eclipses, learn the art of founding cannon, and fathom all the industrial arts to their minutest details,—in a word, exhibit himself as a universal genius; but, in order that he might be a perfect prodigy, after having single-handed built a vessel pierced for sixty guns at Saardam, he constructed another at Deptford, which proved to be the fastest on the sea! Really Voltaire counted too much on the credulity of his readers and the authority of his own name.

Let us not forget to remark that, wanting money in England, he sold to English merchants, for 15,000*l.*, the monopoly of selling tobacco in his dominions. This unwise bargain caused two evils at once to the Russian people: it caused an annual export of several millions of money; and added to the miseries of the people, by making them tributaries to a new want. He returned to Holland in a vessel remarkable for its beauty, a token of the munificence of King William, who wished to secure him as an ally: it was a wise policy, for it is known that England has always reaped immense advantages from her commercial relations with Russia.

His arrival at Vienna was celebrated by a festival, in which

the Czar made great pretensions to be an elegant dancer. But while, in thus parading from court to court the restlessness of an unmeasured and puerile vanity, he disgraced in his own person both the sovereign and the nation. A storm, too easy to be foreseen, was gathering in the midst of his dominions. The throne he had left, before being firmly seated on it, was about to be dashed into fragments, or receive another master. The ancient boyars, the chiefs of religion, jealous and distrustful of the crowds of foreigners who had arrived,—the people, shocked at the violation of their customs, the contempt shown for their opinions, and indignant at beholding their prince insulting the antique austerity of national manners, dressed in foreign costume, and exhibiting himself as an opera-dancer in the saloons of Vienna,—all declared that he had forfeited the crown. The partisans of Sophia fed the flames of revolt; and perhaps Peter would have ceased to reign, had able leaders directed the people and the Strelitz. Their fury, however, as blind as impetuous, grew tame in presence of the troops commanded by the foreign generals, Chein and Gordon; but this defeat only exasperated the malcontents. Peter, quickly informed of the state of things, returned with the greatest celerity. He arrives, shows himself at the windows of the palace, and terror freezes every heart. “If the crime was great, so also was the punishment,” writes Voltaire. But the writer, whose last words were a reproach to the tribunals of his country, which, whether through error or perversity, had shed the blood of an imprudent young man,*—this indefatigable apostle of humanity; ought he to have become the apologist of those torrents of blood, which, under the ruthless hand of the ferocious Peter, deluged the park of Bebrachensko?—ought he to have concealed from posterity the details of that frightful tragedy?

1698. In the first place, they who were supposed to be the

* This alludes to the horrible punishment of young La Barre in France, which Voltaire exerted himself to have commuted; also to his exertions on behalf of Calas. J. D.

chiefs of the conspiracy were executed, with all their relations. Neither age, nor sex, nor station were exempted from this terrible decree. The axe and the wheel were put into active service; and immense pits were dug, not for the burial of the dead, but as the grave of living victims. Several days were occupied in the infliction of the most cruel tortures to extort confessions; for in this prodigious number of the guilty, over whom the soul of any other man would have groaned and shuddered, this great prince did not find sufficient to slake his vengeance. The firmness of the victims wearied the vigour of the executioners. Indignant at not exacting avowals which fury demanded, and at witnessing the heroic courage of these unfortunates triumph over all the forms of punishment then known, Peter, foaming with rage, ordered the judges to descend from their tribunals and discharge the functions of the hangman; he wished to confound all distinctions in the horrors of a general massacre. He desired that every arm which remained faithful to him should wield an axe as the pledge of its devotedness; and he himself, soiling the sacred majesty of the diadem, struck off, right and left, the heads of his unfortunate subjects. On the day of the first executions, says a contemporary, who was an eye-witness, five heads fell under the noblest hand in the empire. Some days afterwards the same hand decapitated six other victims. Hideous details add to the horrors of these revolting scenes. The courtiers, imitating their master, divide the condemned amongst them. Some hold the victims by the hair, that the prince may strike with a swifter and surer aim. Lefort was the only one who refused to stain his hands with blood. Gibbets were prepared round the walls of the city on the entrance to the main roads. More than two thousand were there hung, and a large number in the town itself. Blood also flowed before the Kremlin, and before the monastery in which the princesses Sophia and Eudocia were confined. The whole city was transformed into a vast theatre of tortures, where the corpses of the dead disputed for the space needful for the living.

However, a venerable patriarch, followed by a religious procession, and carrying in his arms the touching image of the Virgin and Child, besought, in the name of the God of mercy, that the carnage should cease, and the remainder of the guilty be spared. Drunk and bespattered with blood, the Czar repulsed him, and answered in these words: "Priest, retire! I know what I ought to do; the blood of a rebellious people is always acceptable to God." Lefort succeeded better in exciting fear in a bosom inaccessible to pity. He made the prince understand that men who could die with such heroic fortitude might at last resolve on defending their lives. The Czar dreaded a reaction, ordered the instant death of those who were suffering a slow agony after having endured the torture, and banished for ever those whom he could not immolate. But the dead bodies of those who had perished stood stiffened by sharp frost, and remained exposed during several months stretched on the earth or bound to the gallows; and it was not till the following spring that their mutilated remains ceased to shock the eyes of the living by the spectacle of a vengeance so criminal by its enormity.*

Such were the virtues, such the generous dispositions that Peter brought back from his study of the manners of his neighbours. Thus he civilised his people and founded a new empire. From that moment the militia of the Strelitz ceased to exist. "This great change," remarks Voltaire, "was effected without the least resistance, because it had been prepared." We have seen *how* it was prepared. "Peter," continues Voltaire, "was more fortunate than the Sultan Osman, having better taken his measures." What good fortune! what measures!

* Printz, grand marshal of the court of Prussia, and ambassador in Russia at the time of these executions, has stated in his memoirs, that at a grand banquet given by Peter, that prince ordered twenty of the Strelitz to be brought from their dungeons, and at each bumper that he quaffed, he struck off the head of one of these unfortunates. He even proposed to the ambassador to take an active part in the butchery!

The survivors of the Strelitz were dispersed with their families over Siberia, Astracan, and the territory of Azof. But these exiles, a few years afterwards, being roused to insurrection in those provinces by the imperial edict which forbade the wearing of beards,—an important part of the national costume, and dear to ancient manners,—the total and definitive suppression of the audacious militia was decreed; the name even was proscribed; and all who survived this great measure were effectively deprived of all means of disturbing the government.

The people adhered to their costume; it was to them an opinion; and when Peter cut off the heads of those who refused to part with their beards, he was at once cruel and absurd. He at the same time wished to replace, by the close vest of the Germans, the ancient national dress, appropriate to the climate, combining nobleness with simplicity; and he encountered an obstinate resistance, which he could only conquer by punishments. In all respects he violated manners. He broke open the doors of the *gynceum*, and threw women into the tumult of civil life, that he might fashion society after an English or French model. This was to corrupt the nation in order to civilise it; and to allow no hope for the amelioration of public manners, which were as depraved as they were gross. Moreover, it is known how deep the roots of oriental customs usually are; they touch the first age of the world. Now, the Russians were Asiatics; all their habits and traditions had resisted the invasions of the Scandinavians, or at least, in fusing themselves with the usages of the companions of Rourik, had predominated in the mixture.*

Other reforms had a more useful object, and were conducted with more moderation and discernment. Such were the abolition of the ridiculous ceremonies observed at marriages, and the suppression of degrading formulas which were used in petitions to the emperor, or to those who represented his authority. Printing was

* In reference to the affair of the beards, it must be remarked that the peasants and ecclesiastics had the privilege of retaining theirs.

relieved from some restrictions. Particular schools were established for teaching the dead and living languages, and good books were translated. The natives, hitherto imprisoned within the limits of their fatherland, were allowed to seek instruction and example from foreign nations. In our days, when the Russians have become a people so travelling and so expensive, and parade their pompous laziness throughout Europe, perhaps, according to the remark of a German writer, it might be prudent to revive the ancient prohibition against travelling.

The changes introduced into the Church excited a more lively irritation than all the other innovations. It was wise and just to reduce the excessive power of the clergy ; but the brutality of the means employed by the Czar, the scandalous saturnalia by which he turned into ridicule certain practices of a very harmless superstition, degraded not only the bishops, the archimandrites, the popes, and all the ministers of religion, but religion itself. Now, the Russian people, more than any other, needed the support of religious affections and habits, for more than any other they were ignorant and wretched. The monasteries of men and women were struck at in this general reform. Celibacy, the faculty of taking the vows at any age, the long and painful Lent to which every pious Russian was subjected, were among the encroachments of the Church which ceased to be respected ; and, finally, the calendar itself was the object of a modification which made time accord in Russia with the time of the other nations of Europe, and opened the year on the 1st of January. Before that epoch, they dated from the creation of the world, and not from the birth of Christ. A last blow remained to be struck ; it was the abolition of the patriarchate, and the annexation of ecclesiastical supremacy to the imperial dignity. This great measure was effected in 1721 ; and in the place of that eminent dignitary, whose excessive and very popular authority had more than once given umbrage to that of the sovereigns, Peter established a college of bishops, under the title of the Holy Directing Synod. From that

time this synod had the supreme control and judgment in all ecclesiastical affairs, and recognised, on ultimate appeal, the authority of the head of the state. Peter the First was very proud at having accomplished these changes; he boasted of being more fortunate than Louis the Fourteenth in religious matters. "I have forced," said he, "my clergy into obedience and peace, while he has allowed himself to be ruled by his." The historian of the age of Louis the Fourteenth ought not to have narrated this effusion of monarchical fatuity without remarking, that Louis the Fourteenth had to deal with a very different clergy from that of Russia. Far from being degraded by ignorance or bad manners, the Gallican Church, so justly celebrated, was one of the first orders of the state, and showed itself worthy of its rank in the political hierarchy by the regularity of its morals and the extent of its intelligence. During centuries, a crowd of first-rate men had shed lustre on it by their great talents; it had often given ministers to the throne, and worthy members to science. Finally, the Gallican clergy, while declining the papal authority when the question was to maintain reservations favourable to their own dignity, could approach the Holy See for protection if attacks from the civil authority menaced their power. They were not ultramontane, but catholic.

After having attempted to play the part of a legislator and reformer, Peter the First was eager to figure as a conqueror. The peace of Carlowitz having restrained his ambition on the side of Turkey, he sought subjects of aggrandisement and quarrel to the northward of his dominions. A port on the Baltic was necessary to him, if only to prevent the neutralisation of his commercial views; and, speaking in the sense of royalty, it was a tolerable good reason for going to war; however, as this was still the age in which positive interests were clogged with a chivalric diplomacy, Peter sought, in the point of honour, a plausible pretext, and demanded satisfaction for the affronts offered to him by the Count of Dahlberg at Riga, and for other grievances. Charles the

Twelfth then commenced his adventurous, brilliant, and singular career, on that same throne of Sweden which had been illustrated by the more solid talents and the more truly heroic exploits of Gustavus Adolphus. He desired war at least as much as his neighbour; consequently his answer was not calculated to delay its outbreak. The siege of Narva was resolved upon. Peter had leagued himself with Poland and Denmark to carry on this war; Poland furnished him with engineers, artillerymen, and officers of every arm. What foresight in the policy of that turbulent republic! Charles the Twelfth, after having defeated the king of Denmark and signed peace with him at Travensal, advanced with less than 18,000 men to meet the Russians, who were 32,000 strong. At the commencement of the action, the Polish general officers, discontented, committed treason, and, rushing from their entrenchments, repaired to the Swedes. The Russian army offered a feeble resistance, and capitulated. The results of that day were disastrous and humiliating: Peter the First there lost all his artillery, his generals, his officers; and not one of his soldiers retired with his arms, notwithstanding the terms of the capitulation. The Swedes abused a victory which had not been sufficiently disputed to entitle the vanquished to be worthy of their regard. Peter, it must be confessed, was not dispirited by this misfortune. He imputed it to the insufficiency of his forces, or at least to the inexperience of his officers, and courageously reorganised a new army. The bells of Moscow were cast to renew his artillery; by prodigious activity, multiplying his personal presence, he visited his arsenals, his workshops, his capital; and negotiated, in order that he might reanimate the drooping zeal of his allies. His allies abandoned him. Augustus himself required assistance against the Palatines, who regretted having him for a king, and who had followed the party of the Prince of Conti. They invited the king of Sweden into Poland. However, the Russians dared to again present themselves before the Swedes, thanks to the courage of Prince Cheremetef, and attacked their enemies at Dorpat. They gained

the victory after a combat of four hours ; they killed 3000 men, and captured the baggage of the enemy. It should be remarked, that they were broken by the first charge of the Swedish battalions, but rallied. This trifling success commenced the new military destinies of Russia ; for it decided the question, whether the Russians could fight as well as the Swedes, justly named the scourge of Germany. From this moment Charles the Twelfth only listened to his blind temerity and pride ; incapable of profiting either by a reverse or a victory, and having confidence only in obstinacy, he committed sufficient faults to compel fortune to espouse the cause of his rival.

Cheremetef, who had defeated the Swedes at Dorpat, laid siege to Marienbourg. In this town was taken an obscure young orphan, brought up by the charity of a Protestant clergyman, and a few days previously wife of a simple Swedish soldier : this young girl was destined to ascend the throne of the czars ; she was the celebrated Catharine, the first of that name. After Marienbourg, Notebourg, a much stronger place, and built on an island of the Lake of Ladoga, was besieged. The attack, carried on with the greatest vigour for thirty days, forced the feeble remnant of the Swedish garrison, who defended themselves heroically, to capitulate. Eighty-three combatants, and one hundred wounded, issued from the ramparts of the place, defiled, drums beating, banners flying, before the army it had resisted. Notebourg repaired, took the name of Schlusselfourg (the key), because its position does, in fact, command the course of the Neva, at the spot where that river flows out of the Lake of Ladoga. The conquest of Mienchantz, another fortress which commanded the mouth of the same river, followed the former, and was effected with the same success. (1703.) It was an important event in the military and political life of Peter the First : from that time he had a port on the Baltic.

It was at this epoch, 1703, that the foundations of St. Petersburg were laid. Peter has been greatly praised for having upreared

a powerful and superb capital in a spot where nothing was seen but pestilential marshes, and the miserable huts of fishermen. It is possible that there was great merit in thus triumphing over obstacles, and giving the lie to nature, which seems to have traced on these unfruitful fields these words:—*The life and prosperity of men shall not here abide*; but when we reflect on the frightful destruction of men caused by this enterprise,—when we read that famine alone carried off one hundred thousand,—we are less disposed to admire the perseverance, and particularly the foresight of Peter the Great. The fort of Cronstadt, destined to protect St. Petersburg on the side of the sea, was constructed in the middle of winter. From the midst of these vast labours Peter hurried to Carelia to beat the Swedes; rushed to Olonetz, there to construct vessels; and spread everywhere around him that extraordinary activity which was the privilege of his organisation.

He was eager, however, to efface the disgrace of Narva; and the siege of that place was resolved upon at the same time as that of Dorpat. The first of these towns was defended by a strong garrison, and commanded by a brave officer. The Czar made himself master of it by a stratagem which, in strictness, ought to be termed treason; it is, at least, among the means rarely permitted in war among European nations. (1704.) The besieged were awaiting a reinforcement; the Emperor made a part of his army adopt the Swedish uniform, and, under the ramparts, displayed a contest between these pretended Swedes and the Russians; the latter feigning to be repulsed, the commandant of the place then opened the gates to those whom he mistook for his countrymen. The General de Horn, who had valiantly resisted, was taken, and led before the Czar, who, in his passion, struck him on the face. An historian remarks, in extenuation of this unworthy violence, that Horn might have been punished with death for having held the place, when no hope of retaining it remained. If that be so, then he should have been put to death, not outraged. (1704.) All these victories were solemnised by a third triumphal

entry into Moscow. These kinds of festivals greatly pleased Peter the Great, although he affected only to play a secondary part. A greater and more vast monument of his reign and genius, a veritable triumph achieved for the benefit of his subjects and his empire, was the formation of the canal which joined the Baltic to the Caspian Sea, in uniting the river Tver to the river Msta. But the honour of that idea does not belong to Peter the First ; it was proposed by an obscure trader named Serdioukof. Let us hasten to the close of the first act of that northern war, in which Peter, instructed by adversity, passed so rapidly from a secondary political rank to the military supremacy of the North. If Charles, victorious at Narva, had collected all his forces against an enemy cast down by defeat, he might probably have pursued him to his capital (as Levesque remarks), and might, at least for a time, have seated himself on the throne of the czars ; but listening to nothing but his hatred against Augustus, the hero of Sweden left an open field to the Russians, whom he despised, persuaded that he would always have time to wreak his vengeance on them, and exterminate them.* That pride was his ruin. Master of all Ingria, Peter the First had confided the government of it to Menzikoff, that famous favourite, that pastrycook's boy become a prince ; and who, like all other *parvenu* courtiers, was devoted, without reserve or modesty, to the wishes of the sovereign by whom he had been metamorphosed. After having repulsed the Swedes, who menaced his rising city, he went in pursuit of them to Courland, with the hope of penetrating to Riga ; but, stopped by General Leven-

* M. Levesque is by no means a partisan of the *absolute* in the contingency of things and their enchainment, a system that many in our days force themselves to credit, because it is accommodating, and a grand means to success with most persons, by explaining *that what has happened must have happened* ; or, in other words, becoming a prophet after the event. M. Levesque thinks, that in the mightiest events, and in the most imposing successes, there is a point vulnerable by chance, and by which a slight change in circumstances may produce a totally different order of things and results. History teaches no other lesson.

haupt, and completely beaten by him at Gemavershof, he was again defeated in two encounters with the Lithuanians of the party of the unfortunate King Augustus, whom he constantly supported in spite of Poland. The palatines, the ecclesiastical primates, and the bishops, assembled at this very moment to choose another sovereign. Augustus was justly odious to the fortune of that republic, whose liberties at a later date he corrupted and oppressed. But after having been successively beaten at Narva, Jacobstadt, and Gemavershof, the Czar captured Mittau, besieged the citadel, and entered it by capitulation. The Russians have accused the Swedes with having on this occasion violated and profaned the tombs of the ancient dukes of Courland ; and the Swedes have retorted on the Russians the accusation of this infamy. At Tykoczin Peter joined the pretender Augustus, consoled him in his misfortunes, and promised to avenge him. They repaired together to Lithuania. Peter, on departing, left him an army, and returned to Moscow in triumph, as was his custom after having made a very difficult campaign, says Voltaire. Very difficult, truly ! he had taken Mittau, and massacred the inhabitants of Narva. But Charles the Twelfth was advancing to Grodno. General Schullembourg, at the head of twelve thousand Saxons and six thousand Russians, the last hope of Augustus, was beaten at Travenstadt by Rehnschild. The rout was complete ; a horrible butchery was made of the Russians : * the French battalions, incorporated with the Saxons, passed over to the Swedes at the commencement of the action.† Peter ordered Menzikoff to march against the conquerors, and hastened to secure, or at least to prepare, the defence of the north of his dominions and his conquests in Ingria. Augustus signed the degrading treaty which stripped him of the

* The chaplain Norberg pretends that the war-cry of the Swedes in this battle was, " In the name of God ! " and that of the Russians, " Massacre all ! " but it was the Swedes who massacred all in the name of God.—*Voltaire*.

† These three battalions had been taken prisoners at the battle of Hochstedt, and incorporated, in spite of themselves, with the Saxon battalions.

crown; and, to complete his shame, he gave up Patkul, who had so valiantly defended him ; * he even wrote, by the order of Charles the Twelfth, a letter of congratulation to the new king, Stanislaus. The great writer whom we are sometimes obliged to contradict, here makes a very just reflection, worthy of his philosophical genius. “When we reflect,” he observes, “that King Augustus was one of the bravest princes in Europe, we clearly perceive that it is mental courage which destroys or preserves states.” The question then arose of electing a new king for Poland ; but Peter, Charles the Twelfth, and the Diet, could not agree. The Diet brought forward Prince Ragotski, formerly the formidable competitor of the Emperor Leopold. Peter the First proposed Siniawski, Grand General of the Republic : Poland was on the eve of witnessing three kings at the same time. A French ambassador spoke of peace to Charles the Twelfth, hoping to induce him to turn his arms against Joseph. The obstinate warrior rejected the overtures ; whatever might be the fate of Poland, he was resolved only to treat of peace at Moscow.† He marched, he arrived in Lithuania, and was on the point of surprising the Czar in Grodno. He threw a bridge over the Berezina, and in a few days afterwards passed the torrent of Vabis in sight of the Russians, attacked them, defeated them, crossed the Borysthenes at Mohilof, and, on the faith of Mazeppa, who promised to raise the Ukraine in his favour, plunged into the deserts of that vast province. The Russians followed him from Smolensko ; they came up with Levenhaupt, who was leading to him sixteen thousand men from Livonia, between the Borysthenes and the Sossa, and defeated the Swedes, though without being able to put them to rout. (1708.) This obstinate battle lasted three days; and the

* Charles the Twelfth placed Patkul on the wheel ; and all orders relative to the details of that execution were by the hand of the king.

† What a subject of reflection is this fatal obstinacy ! an example of which has been reproduced in our own days to ruin a much more exalted fortune. (This refers to the first Napoleon. J. D.)

Swedes, exhausted by a rapid march through countries almost impassable, yielded to excessive fatigue rather than to the exertions of their enemy. Charles collected the remnant of his troops, and, still finding himself at the head of 30,000 men, persisted in his scheme of subjugating the Ukraine, and then marching on Moscow. He only obtained from Mazeppa, who had promised him provisions, ammunition, arms, and soldiers, the aid of a few thousands of Zaporavian Cossacks,—a fatal succour, since that circumstance led him to Pultawa. Charles attacked that town; but Peter marched thither all his forces, established his camp, provided for all the wants of his troops, took precautions to ensure a retreat in case of necessity, and merited for once, by a prudent and wise conduct, the name of an able captain, the object of his wishes. It was under the walls of Pultawa, and on the banks of the Worskla, which bathes it, that fortune was about to decide the fate of these two rivals, to which the destinies of the half of Europe were attached. Voltaire, here calculating the importance of interests, hesitates not to say that it was far preferable that Charles should succumb; that it was only one hero less; whereas, by the defeat or death of Peter, Russia would have been re-plunged in chaos. Perhaps the basis of this appreciation might be more justly established; but if, in particular, we consider the shameful peace of Pruth, and then the death of Prince Alexis, we shall be compelled to regard the day of Pultawa as the brightest moment in the life of Peter, and consequently that in which his end would have been desirable. Charles, although wounded, unwilling to abandon his custom of offering battle to the enemy, rushed precipitately from his entrenchments; the impetuosity of his soldiers found in the Russians a worthy resistance. This action was very animated, but only lasted two hours: the Swedes, assailed in turn by the Russians who had quitted their entrenchments, and were suddenly ranged in battle array with remarkable precision, yielded in all quarters. Charles, compelled to flee, followed by about 14,000 men, marched towards the Borysthenes.

A more considerable number of Swedes, under the orders of Levenhaupt, with some thousands of Zaporavians, surrendered to Menzikoff, who commanded 10,000 cavalry. Such was the famous day of Pultova or Pultawa, in which the temerity and imprudence of Charles the Twelfth, at length wearying out fortune, caused it to pass over to his rival. This victory began to fix the power of Russia in the north. Peter honoured his prisoners by inviting the principal among them to his table, drank to their health, and saluted them as his masters ; but shortly afterwards he sent them all to Siberia : thus he avenged, it is said, the outrage he had received from Charles the Twelfth by refusing a challenge which he had sent him before the siege.

Profiting by his victory, he returned to Poland, replaced the crown on the too-humbled brow of Augustus, and concluded a treaty against Sweden with Poland, Denmark, and the king of Prussia ; thence he marched to Riga, blockaded that place, and hastened to prepare a triumphal festival at Moscow. There he exhibited a vast display of the spoils of the vanquished ; they themselves appeared, as well as the litter on which Charles was borne during the action. Henceforward his successes followed a rapid progression : he took Elbing, Wibourg, the capital of Carelia, completed the siege of Riga, and insured the conquest of Livonia by subjecting Pernau and Revel.

During these different expeditions, and while Charles XII. carried into Turkey his unfortunate valour and his intractable pride, all his neighbours, formerly trembling before him, resumed concessions extorted by fear ; rushed into his dominions, already ravaged by pestilence ; and forced even his subjects, by an example unparalleled, to sign an act of neutrality, by virtue of which they were not permitted to succour their king.

The earnest entreaties of the Swedish monarch at length drew from Sultan Achmet III. a declaration of war against Russia ; the latter had, moreover, abundant reasons for disquietude in the conquests of the Czar on the shores of the Black Sea. On the other

hand, the Khan of the Crimea, the natural ally of the Porte, dreaded a neighbourhood which could now only offer him an enemy or a master. His lively remonstrances accelerated the habitual tardiness of the deliberations of the Divan. The Czar caused himself to be preceded in Moldavia by Marshal Cheremetef, with the troops which were in Poland and Livonia. Warned by experience, he would not, on this occasion, move far from his capital without having intrusted the regency to men whose firmness and whose devotion to his interests were well known to him. From Petersburg he went to Moscow, to celebrate his marriage with the young Livonian captured at Marienbourg eight years before, whose charms, but especially whose mind, had acquired over his an irrevocable ascendancy;—a singular woman, who, deprived by misfortune and the abjectness of the first years of her youth of the virtues peculiar to her sex, knew how to find others, in her new fortune, worthy of being enlightened by the full blaze of the throne. Augustus joined the Czar; he had promised powerful aid; but, a king without power, as well as a prince without character, he received from the Diet a refusal to furnish the supplies. Moldavia and Wallachia had given to the Czar the same hopes; they proved equally abortive, through the rivalry of the two hospodars who commanded those provinces, Constantine Brankovan and Demetrius Cantemir. The Vizier Baltagi Mehemet had already crossed the Danube, at the head of 100,000 men; the Czar, on his part, passed the Borysthenes, and hastened to join Marshal Cheremetef. Catharine, wishing to justify the brilliant favours she had received, shared, with warlike firmness, the fatigues of her husband, and rode on horseback by his side, at the head of the troops. She already understood the genius of the nation and its military spirit. The general rendezvous of the army was Yassi, on the borders of the Pruth. Want of provisions, excessive scarcity of water, other obstacles, other dangers—the sad fruits of that arid climate—soon rendered the march of the army as hazardous as painful. Whatever vigilance the Czar might use, he could not arrive in time to prevent the Turks passing

the Pruth, which was the capital point. The Turkish army was four times more considerable than that of the Czar ; that fact is not contested : but the two armies offered a still greater disproportion in the skill and success of their movements. After having so boldly crossed the Pruth, and forced the Russian infantry to retreat, the vizier suddenly cut off all communication between the principal division of the hostile army and another important body ; shut up that army in the marshes which border the river ; cut off all hope of retreat, all possibility of foraging or of receiving provisions, and kept it under the fire of forty cannon, by which it was crushed. Peter fled before the imminent peril ; he was pursued, beaten in his flight, and vainly changed his position ; every where he met the same disadvantages, the same dangers. Daily skirmishes had considerably weakened the Russians, and the fire of the enemy every moment thinned their ranks ; their cavalry was destroyed. If the Czar did not fight, he must soon yield through famine ; hunger and thirst besieged his camp. In fighting, he must conquer ; an expectation too doubtful in this disparity of numbers and universal discouragement. Devoured by anxiety, trembling at the approach of the fatal hour which was to annihilate him, shunning the looks of all, Peter concealed, in the secrecy of his tent, the excess of his despair. The army, in suspense, were expecting from the chief one of those generous resolutions which extreme cases usually inspire in elevated minds. He was unable to adopt any. The mask fell ; the hero of a moment disappeared, to leave no more in his place than the weakest of mortals. He went to parade on the roads, hitherto resounding with his premature triumphs, mere fragments of his power,—a life preserved by cowardice, the price of the prayers of his wife, and of the generosity of an enemy for whom he had affected the most sovereign contempt. He was obliged to cede all his conquests on the Black Sea ; and by that act to renounce his favourite project of aggrandisement to the south of his dominions, and of communication with the richest countries of India.*

* The Treaty of the Pruth was signed in 1711. J. D.

It was on his return from this disastrous campaign that Peter caused Catherine to be solemnly recognised. As yet she only had a doubtful title to the respect of the nation ; her admirable conduct on the banks of the Pruth merited a more certain one at his hands. At the same epoch he married Alexis, his son, to the Princess of Wolfenbittel. We must not omit a fact very well known, which sheds the interest of singularity over these events ; it was the apparition of the brother of Catherine, who, still living under the ascendancy of the misfortunes common to their births, dragged out in Saxony a wandering and miserable existence, whilst his sister was seated on a throne. The pride of the Czar, perhaps humbled by his recent defeats, was not astonished at the rags of this unexpected relative ; he received him graciously, and prepared his recognition by Catherine in a manner sufficiently in accordance with the habitual originality of his character.

Soon recovered from the assaults with which fortune had smote him, he formed new projects of conquest. His expedition to Finland threw back some lustre on his dishonoured arms ; he at first seized the principal towns of that province. All the north was agitated at that epoch : the neighbours of Charles the Twelfth disputed the spoils of that unfortunate monarch, who only returned to find on the island of Aland, in the Baltic Sea, the conqueror of Pultawa. His rashness despising obstacles, never calculated their importance. Here his vessels of the line were defeated by the Russian galleys : these galleys, of small proportions, manœuvred with facility in these channels encumbered with shoals, which rendered all rapid motion impossible for large ships. This was the occasion of a new triumphal festival to the Czar ; he had become accustomed to these magnificent displays of his vanity, and he triumphed for the slightest success.

It was before the end of this last war of the north that Peter the First undertook his last European excursion. He at first repaired to Holland, then to France, with the intention of drawing this latter power into his schemes. The difficulty of such

a negotiation being above the dexterity of the Russian diplomatists of that epoch, this prince would only intrust the promotion of his views to himself, or counted greatly on the effect of his presence and his personal conversations with the Prince Regent;* but Philip, who possessed so much political sagacity amidst all the excesses of his private life, would not allow himself to be seduced into an alliance against Great Britain, which at that time could not accord with the interests of France. However, he concluded with the emperor of Russia a commercial treaty already broached in 1716 by the French ambassadors sent to the Hague to bring about an understanding between the two monarchs whose quarrels disturbed the north. The emperor of Austria and the king of Prussia had intervened in this mediation. The king of Denmark and the king of England remonstrated warmly with the mediators: the first, to obtain possession of Scania, occupied militarily by the Russians; and the second, that the Russians should evacuate Mecklenberg. The latter made this demand not as sovereign of Great Britain, but as elector of Hanover and director of the circle of Lower Saxony. Henceforward Peter the First seemed formidable to the repose of Germany; and after having made use of him to destroy Charles the Twelfth, it was sought to prevent his interference with the affairs of Europe, and cast him back into his deserts. It was even desired to attack him, could it have been done with success. Peter penetrated the astucious policy of the allies, and little was needed to induce him to break with them, and form a separate peace with his obstinate antagonist, Charles the Twelfth. The Baron Goertz, become minister of the latter,—a skilful man and a subtle tactician, if ever there was one,—desired to re-establish the fortune of his master; and in order to obtain the alliance of Russia, proposed nothing less to the Czar than to yield Livonia, Estland or Esthonia, Ingria, and Carelia; that is to say, all the countries for which so many battles had been fought, and so much blood had been spilt. However, this was no

* Philip Duke of Orleans, Regent of France during the minority of Louis XV. J. D.

more than a renunciation of what had been lost; but it might have satisfied the pride of the reigning Russian monarch, master of those provinces, since it was a solemn avowal of the superiority of his arms and the legitimacy of his rights. Goertz pretended to have found a large compensation for this sacrifice in favour of the Czar, in executing, through him, his vast designs. He wished to re-establish Stanislaus, take Stettin from the king of Prussia, Bremen and Verdun from the king of England, even hurl the latter from his throne, and there place the Pretender, son of James the Second. This project could only succeed through a rebellion in England: he fomented it. But the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, being in strict alliance with George the First, it was necessary to strip him of the regency to deprive George of his most powerful protector. The enterprise was difficult; but the regent had a dexterous enemy in Cardinal Alberoni, minister of Spain: Goertz knew it, went to visit him at Madrid, and in him encountered a man who, sprung from the most profound obscurity, wished to signalise his genius, and render himself famous by convulsing Europe. From Madrid he proceeded to Paris, where he scattered gold in profusion, remitted to him by the Spanish minister; and extended his correspondence even to Rome with the Pretender, whom the peace concluded between England, France, and Holland had compelled to seek an asylum in that capital of the Catholic world. After having stretched out this vast net of intrigues, Goertz returned to Holland, and hastened to communicate to the Czar the success of his policy in the south of Europe. Not to embroil himself with England, Peter only gave his secret and conditional adhesion to these projects. But shortly afterwards, when all the manœuvres and snares of Goertz were discovered, and himself arrested by order of the States-General, the publication of his various correspondence made known all the part which the emperor of Russia had taken in these plots of revolution with Charles the Twelfth, who was to disembark in England with 12,000 men.

We will not enter into the details of the journey of Peter the

First to France ; suffice it to say, that he was the object of lively curiosity, and that from the Academy down to the humblest of the public establishments, he saw himself complimented by the solitudes and attentions of a flattery always ingenious and spiritual, but which, in his proud thoughts, doubtlessly gave the nation no title to his esteem. When he arrived at the Gobelins, his portrait was taken ; when he entered the Louvre, a medal was struck and fell at his feet, bearing his effigies and surrounded with a pompous exergue. He visited every thing ; prostrated himself before the tomb of Richelieu ; approached the bed of Madame de Maintenon, and considered in a silence, which partook neither of respect nor admiration, the remnant of those charms which the infirm Scarron had enjoyed in their spring, and Louis the Fourteenth had worshipped in their decline ; and having regarded her for a short time, he let fall the curtain on this great example of human vanities.

The Sorbonne, another old woman with pretensions, wished to profit by the opportunity to make an effort in favour of the Latin Church, by speaking to the Czar of a scheme of re-union. He allowed the French doctors to correspond with the Russian bishops, the result of which only made known the epistolary style of the Greek clergy. Peter simply desired to turn the Sorbonne into mockery by taking this step ; and the proof is, that precisely in the following year, on return from his journey, he established a burlesque festival of a conclave, in which the authority of the Pope was disgracefully ridiculed, and in which none but courtiers notorious for the basest vices took a part. In this conclave questions were discussed worthy of the actors : thus a cask of bad wine having been found by drunkards robed as cardinals, they went from compartment to compartment to take the advice of the sacred college ; the decision was, to send back the cask to *knias papa*, in other words, to inscribe it on the *Index*. These orgies lasted three days ; several died, the rest were carried home on carts. The festival of the conclave was often renewed in Russia ;

and particularly on the later occasions, observes Levesque, every horror capable of revolting decency and human nature was perpetrated.*

The order of facts obliges us to pass from the festival of the conclave to the death of Alexis; it is a transition from wine and shame to blood and terror. However, let us pursue our task, and sketch the tragedy. This epoch in the life of Peter the Great is the fatal quicksand on which all his panegyrists and all his admirers, with their empty parade of lies and sophisms, have been wrecked. Here truth appears under terrible, imperious features; and the writer who refuses to paint it faithfully ought at least to observe a modest silence. Voltaire exhausts himself in reasonings and disquisitions which render his embarrassment the more palpable. He enumerates the defects in the character of Alexis—defects which he magnifies into crimes; he says that he was superstitious, and attached to ancient customs; then he laboriously details the pretended grievances and wrongs specified in the acts of accusation, or in the inconceivable avowals which the unhappy prince was forced to sign. However, Voltaire, unable to dissemble the horror that this recital, wholly false as it is, must inspire, and not knowing how to escape from so difficult a dilemma, finishes by invoking the pity of his readers in favour of a prince compelled, for the good of his dominions, to put his

* Voltaire takes things less seriously than Levesque; he sees no more in the festival than a comedy, and he adds, “But this ridicule, which seemed to have no practical result, confirmed the people in their hatred to a Church which pretended to supreme power, and whose chief had anathematised so many kings. The Czar avenged, by ridicule, twenty emperors of Germany, ten kings of France, and a crowd of sovereigns.” It was a paltry revenge: Voltaire would have done better by confessing that the festival of the conclave was scandalous and indecent; but at the same time remarking that the popes had exhibited in their court others still more to be condemned. Never was there offered to the world a scene of more unbridled immorality than the Vatican witnessed when the Pope Alexander the Sixth married his son Borgia. There fifty courtesans danced naked. (See the Appendix to the Pontificate of Leo the Tenth, by William Roscoe.)

son to death. It is to immolate the law of nature on the harlot shrine of expediency. Peter reproached his son with incapacity and a want of emulation, which rendered him unworthy of being his heir, because these defects disqualified him from following up the grand work of the regeneration of Russia. He also reproached him with having abandoned his young and virtuous wife, to cohabit with a peasant of Finland; but these grievances, though well founded, seem rather the pretext than the cause of the inhuman decree which smote the Czarevitch. That which profoundly irritated Peter was, that his son adhered obstinately to the customs which he wished to abolish, and espoused all the prejudices, all the hostility of that part of the nation which the reforms of his father especially vexed and alarmed. The priests, with whom this young man daily got intoxicated, the nobles, and even those who had superintended his education, flattered him with the hope of soon ascending the throne, because the health of the emperor was failing; and, once master, Alexis was to involve his paternal inheritance in confusion, and retrograde with the national aristocracy to the ancient times of Russia. Thus this ignorant and weak prince was the instrument of the intrigues of some discontented men. It is probable that his mother, the Empress Eudocia, first wife of the Czar, then imprisoned in a convent, was not a stranger to these projects. Alexis was moreover soured by the presence of a son born of Catherine; he had reason to believe that the ambition of his step-mother would remove him from the throne. However, he readily abandoned all pretensions to it when he was convinced that his life was in danger. He declared himself incapable, unworthy of the crown, and promised all that was desired. He even asked to become a monk;—it was the only punishment that ought to have been inflicted on him. He had neither the heart of a villain nor the soul of a king. Finally, he took advantage of the absence of his father, when the latter undertook the second journey we have related, to flee to Vienna, where he put himself under the protection of the Emperor Charles VI.

From Vienna he went to Naples ; and there he was joined by the ambassadors of his father, empowered to persuade him to return. As soon as his escape was known, his sentence of death was pronounced in the implacable heart of his parent. Thus all the entreaties, all the protestations used to determine him to this fatal return were but execrable excuses. Peter, in writing, promised him an absolute pardon. "Return," said he, "and I will love you more than ever ; you will be my beloved son." Between these words, the language of a fond father, and the intrigues which procured the condemnation of Alexis, there is a frightful opposition. A long inquiry, which was only a protracted agony, solemnised this royal murder : the unfortunate child was forced to become his own accuser ; he signed all the confessions extorted from him ; and if any thing could detract from the pity that such a fate merits, it is the excess of baseness, the abnegation of all dignity, with which this prince signed himself, GUILTY SLAVE, INCAPABLE SERVANT, and UNWORTHY SON, in demanding pardon from his MOST MERCIFUL FATHER.

Such was not the attitude nor the resignation of that Don Carlos to whom Alexis has been compared.* But we may on this occasion assimilate Philip II. to Peter I. Each, in murdering his son, pretended to have performed a legitimate, necessary, and almost holy act. It is not known how Don Carlos perished ; the end of Alexis also is unknown. The most common opinion is, that he died with fright after the reading of his sentence. Some think that he was decapitated in his prison by a German general : it is the opinion of Eichhorn. Lamberty affirms, horrible though it be, that the Czar himself was his executioner.

* When, after having said to his father Philip, "Let your majesty bear in mind that it is your own blood that is about to be spilt," Philip made this atrocious answer, "When I have bad blood, I offer my arm to a surgeon that he may open a vein ;" Don Carlos replied with the dignity of a hero, "Sire, I have wished to fulfil the desires of a person whom I ought to please to my last hour, otherwise I would never have solicited pardon ; and I shall die with more glory than you have lived."

Finally, it has been said that Catherine gave him poison; but that is evidently a fable. What is certain is, that the sentence of the commission, or of the high court which judged him, did not specify either the kind of death, or the hour or the place of execution; it is no less certain that the bishops consulted were by no means inclined to inflict capital punishment; and that, after having cited numerous passages from Holy Writ for and against, they concluded by citing examples of pardon, and in recommending the rights of nature to the heart of the father. The commission itself, composed of ministers, senators, military, and civilians, finished by submitting their deliberation to the *merciful* revision of the *very merciful* monarch—these are the very words of the act. The Czar, therefore, was the only judge, the only assassin of his son.

The accomplices or friends of the Czarewitch were also punished with death. The fury of Peter the Great was only calmed when he saw no one, far or near, who had been connected with his son. Those whose deeds were not fully established, or had not sufficient colour to justify their trial, were poisoned; and amongst them was the Bishop of Kief. Peter showed himself less severe with some of the nobles who shortly afterwards were convicted of very criminal malversations. But the plundering only attacked public prosperity; and the public depredators were exonerated for fines, and some blows of the cudgel, which the Czar administered with his own hand. It was his habitual custom personally to beat the first nobles of his court.

“Whilst this tragedy,” says Voltaire, “was enacting in the capital of the empire, war and diplomatic intrigues continued without. Alberoni and Goertz believed themselves on the point of convulsing Europe from one extremity to the other. A ball from a culverin, fired at hazard from the bastions of Frederickshall, in Norway, confounded all their schemes: Charles XII. was slain; the Spanish fleet was destroyed by the English; the conspiracy fomented in France was detected and rendered abortive; Alberoni expelled from Spain, Goertz decapitated at Stockholm; and of all

this terrible league, scarcely commenced, none remained powerful but the Czar, who, not having compromised himself with any one, gave the law to all his neighbours." What flexibility of morals is here, in the admiration of such a policy and such a conduct!

Peter prosecuted the war against Sweden, invaded the coasts of that kingdom, burned more than sixty villages, and finally compelled the queen, who had succeeded Charles XII., to demand the renewal of negotiations for peace. She obtained it through the mediation of the Regent, duke of Orleans. It should be remarked, that the Czar was not willing to consent to the armistice when ready for signature; a circumstance which may give us an idea of the generosity of his proceedings when he was the strongest. The treaty of Neustadt assured him possession of all the provinces conquered to the north of his dominions, and placed him at the summit of his hopes. He manifested his joy by festivals of a magnificence which surpassed that of his first triumphs, and received from the assembled synod and senate the title of "Great," and "Father of his country;" which would have constituted his glory, had he not himself solicited them. The greater part of the European powers recognised him by the title of emperor, through their ambassadors; the pope alone, using these idle reprisals, refused to imitate their example. Successes so brilliant ought to have satisfied his soul; but destiny, which prepared his approaching nothingness, seemed desirous of heaping on his last days the illusions of glory. It led him back to the shores of the Caspian Sea, the theatre of his earliest exploits. Under a prince enervated by effeminacy, the unworthy descendant of those heroes whose name Asia still repeats with a pride mingled with terror, Persia was at once exposed to the calamities of civil war, to the irruptions of nations which recognised its suzerainty, and of those more warlike people from whom it purchased a difficult repose. The descendants of the soldiers of Timour—then known under the name of Afghans—conducted by the ferocious Mirivitz, under the standard of revolt, burned provinces; and desolating the

frontiers, seemed to invite the foreigner to devastate the antique monarchy of Sapor and Chosroes. The plunder of a Russian factory established in the town of Shamacia was the pretext used by Peter to cover his design of profiting by the misfortunes of this country, once so flourishing. Having seized on the city of Derbent, he was obliged to suspend his military operations; his commissariat having perished in the neighbourhood of Astracan, want of provisions stopped his career. But the dethroned prince, and his son, who immediately succeeded him, and who was compelled to defend his inheritance, successively sought the support of the Russian monarch, and bought it dearly. They engaged to cede the towns of Derbent, of Bakou—gates to the empire on the Caspian Sea—with the provinces of Daghestan, of Shirwan, Guilan, of Mazanderan, and Asterabad. Turkey was not oblivious at this juncture, and wished to share in this dismemberment. More enlightened and more provident for the future, she would have defended the cause of Islamism among the Persians, instead of seeing in them a schismatic and rival nation. Ought she not to have been alarmed at the gigantic ascendancy which European civilisation conferred on a formidable people, who, from their cradle, had menaced and harassed the countries of the East, and who thought themselves, by virtue of their religion, the representatives of the ancient sovereigns of Byzantium? War, however, was twice on the point of breaking out between the Porte and Russia; and twice did the representations of the French ambassador at Constantinople effect a reconciliation. Peter retained the provinces he had acquired, and tranquilly built fortresses.

After so much fortune and so many triumphs, excruciating griefs awaited him at his domestic hearth; and it was not among songs of joy that he was destined to descend to the tomb. He had acquired the bitter conviction, that the woman taken from the dregs and obscurity of the populace to be seated on his throne, was faithless. It is known that he decapitated the young Moens de la Croix, accomplice of the empress; and that he led

her on a sledge to the very place of punishment, that she might see the head of her lover fixed on a pole. She uttered not a sigh, not a murmur. However, the Czar had no need of her avowal of her crime, or that grief should disclose what the tongue refused to utter; he knew all, he was convinced; and without the interference of Prince Repnin, who advised him to treat the matter after the European fashion, Catherine would have undergone the same punishment as her lover. It must be remarked, that this latter had not been tried for adultery with the empress; but to ruin him, one of those causes always abundant in courts was pretended. Moens de la Croix and Madame Balk, his sister, who had conducted this intrigue, were accused of being bribed by presents; and as all hope of saving his life was useless, the young man confessed himself guilty of corruption. Catherine was avenged; perhaps she avenged herself. She has been accused of having poisoned her husband; but the crime, if committed, remains a mystery. Many historians have denied it; and have maintained that if Peter the Great died of poison, he died of that which was the fruit of his debaucheries, and against which the pharmacopeia of that epoch had not, even in the most enlightened countries, a remedy sufficiently powerful. However this may be, it is certain he expired in agonies of despair, after having subjected to the most outrageous examinations those women of the court whose fatal favours he expiated. In the ordinary laws of nature, a temperament so vigorous, an organisation so uncommon, seemed to promise him length of days; he was only fifty-two years of age when he expired. (1725.) He died with little courage, and quite destitute of the dignity of resignation,—the only manner in which a great man, or any man of nerve, ought to approach the grave. If, as some sages have pretended, we must await this last act, to judge the drama of a whole life, and then pronounce on the character of a man, we may be permitted to place Peter the Great much below the rank assigned to heroes.

After having traced a much too rapid sketch of the reign of

Peter I., there would be temerity in pronouncing on the validity of his titles to that exalted fame and to the surname of "Great" decreed to him by the flattery or illusion of his own age. Undoubtedly we require documents more copious, and an examination more rigorous, to dispute a glory established whether by a legitimate or usurped title, and consecrated by the praises of several celebrated writers; all that the nature of our labours permits us to do, is to raise doubts. Those who desire complete and solid historical instruction will not confine themselves to the book of Voltaire; and every where else, except in his mendacious panegyric, even in Levesque, they will find strong reasons to believe that it is not easy to decide whether Peter I. did more good than harm to Russia. We will say more: every enlightened critic, whom the noise and glare of political society does not stun or hoodwink, will finish by adopting an opinion contrary to the generally received panegyric of Peter the Great. This prince did not receive in his youth any sound instruction, and, whatever Voltaire may aver to the contrary, nature had not endowed him with a philosophical genius; that is to say, with a genius which sees things as they really are, and judges justly and promptly the relation of cause and effect. If Peter had possessed a superior mind, he would have felt that the manners fitted to a very advanced civilisation could not be transplanted by a mere wave of the hand into his yet barbarous country. He would have seen that nature proceeds slowly and progressively in the formation of communities,—more so, indeed, than in any other of its operations; and that nothing politically social endures unless it is gradually matured. He would not have substituted his capricious will in place of the immutable laws of nature; persuaded that manners and customs are not raised up as easily as fortresses. His ancestors had opened the road to improvements; strangers had visited Russia for more than 200 years; the arts and opinions of Europe were introducing themselves gradually, and without any shock or resistance. Peter came on the scene, and spoilt all

by precipitancy; he was a vigorous, uncompromising revolutionist, who would have communicated his fever of renovation to all his empire. Nevertheless, he only succeeded imperfectly; and the truth is, that in his own country this prince was infinitely less admired than among foreigners; and yet we all know that ignorance is prone to excessive admiration. A national opposition struggled against the major part of his schemes; resistance was only conquered by terrorism; and the things in which he succeeded best did not escape the censure of those who were not imposed upon by the allurements of foreign novelties. In this respect we find very curious particulars in the work of Baron Strahlenberg, who travelled in Russia during the reign of Peter the Great. The very numerous reproaches of his own subjects on his administration are crushing in their energy and truth.

In this long enumeration of the faults of Peter I., or rather in this bill of historical impeachment, the first article bears upon the premature debaucheries of this prince, which depraved his heart, and which so poisoned him with the leprosy of vice, that he could not endure the approach of virtue. His familiarity with men the most abject, his contempt of the clergy, the scandalous farces by which he sought to vilify them having provoked universal murmurs of discontent, this prince, who was regardless of the esteem of his subjects, was indignant at their censure, and punished with all the rage of savage ferocity the slightest expressions which might escape against his person and against the companions of his orgies. He had established a sort of inquisition for the detection of crimes; and not only was every denunciation and every person admitted before this tribunal, but the informer was sure to receive one-half of the property of the person condemned. Masters trembled before their servants, fearful that an accidental expression might form the ground of an accusation of *lèse majesté*,—that crime so well defined by Montesquieu, “the crime of those to whom no other can be imputed.” The president of this inquisitorial commission was a Tatar no less

ferocious than stupid. He put to the torture every one who fell into his power, saying, "He must be a rogue, since he has been in prison." Many innocent persons were put on the wheel, and their limbs dislocated, solely by virtue of this logic. It will be admitted that there was nothing very much to be admired in this institution. But the French, who were in ecstasies with the grand works of Peter the Great, knew nothing of this; and, on the other hand, the Russians, who cursed and despised their sovereign, had not read Voltaire.

The love of this prince for justice has been singularly vaunted. Baron Strahlenberg, after having noticed the fact to which we have just alluded, affirms that a thief or an assassin, even when on the scaffold, might escape punishment by denouncing some powerful subject. The execution was at once suspended; then the unfortunate victim whose name had been pronounced was cited before the terrible tribunal of Preobajenski, and very frequently lost all his property, with his life, on the declaration of a villain, without any regular trial, without the cross-examination of contradictory evidence, without the production of any authentic or conclusive proofs.

Peter I. destroyed his nobility; and at the same time, as he carried the mania of favouritism to a high degree, and his palace, converted into a tavern, was constantly thronged with ignoble buffoons, it followed that the very vilest, sprung from the dregs and offal of society, discharged the most honourable and lucrative employments, thronged the senate, and became the scourges of the people. A voievodship, a government, was the reward of a low boatman, whose only talent was making the Czar laugh amid the fumes of tobacco.

The financial organisation of his dominions did not cost any effort of genius; it was entirely managed on the Turkish principle. He had divided his empire into governments, which he let out on farm-rents; allowing the governors to be represented by viceroys, counsellors, or other officers.

He required all the nobility of his empire to reside near him in the capital; and under his reign there were many lords who had not visited their estates for twenty years. The result of this singular tyranny was the depreciation of all noble properties. It was a clumsy mode of impoverishing the aristocracy; in fact, the whole state suffered, and the bad condition of agriculture frequently produced famines.

He was also active in morally killing and degrading the nobility. All young gentlemen, taken in infancy from their families, were enrolled as soldiers or sailors. Confounded in the different military corps with men of the basest extraction, they forgot their birth, and lost those elevated sentiments which constitute true nobility, and without which names and titles are but words.

Finally, his military and civil organisation, his wars, as well as his vast establishments, are the subjects of reproaches which appear no less well-founded. Every where there was confusion, contradiction, and embarrassment; every where the imperious will of a single mind displaced the law, or those usages which had the force of law. Russia had specially need of men—his wars destroyed more than a million; he desired to build a city in a marsh, and this caused another immense sacrifice of human life. The locality was so badly chosen, that even to this day imperial ukases are required to compel the subjects there to form establishments; and constrained nature, from time to time, re-asserts her rights over this perilous soil, and avenges herself by overflowing it with the waters of the Neva.

It may be supposed that he has been less excused for the murder of Alexis than for any other act. His subjects deemed Peter the Great the more guilty on this account because, by his excessive harshness, he had broken the springs of emulation and courage in the heart of that young prince. He never accosted him but with a stern brow; gave him up early to Menzikoff, whose soul was still baser than his birth; and who, vilely taking

advantage of this paternal indifference, or rather paternal hatred, maltreated the son of his sovereign, and constantly said to him, "I am nearer the throne than you are."

Strahlenburg does not fail to remark, that all these causes of discontent had provoked frequent rebellions; and we must agree that revolt is the certain symptom of suffering among a people accustomed to the yoke. But there was no formidable insurrection, except among the Cossacks, who were not yet so habituated to the rod of a master as the rest of the Russian population.

Finally, the Czar Peter has been reproached with having changed the order of succession to the throne immemorially observed in Russia, and of having thus added one more privilege to the prerogative.

On all these points Voltaire has attempted to justify him, or at least to defend him; but neither the artifices nor talents of that great writer can make us recognise an enlightened prince in a despot. If it cannot be disputed that Peter the Great desired civilisation, commercial prosperity, and political grandeur for his dominions, it is still more demonstrable by his whole history that he fell into this inconsequence, common to minds of secondary order and to great men falling short of greatness,—the inconsequence of wishing the end without willing the means. Had he willed the means, he would have commenced by manumitting his people from the servitude of the soil. He carried on ruinous wars, he undertook difficult negotiations to render his commerce more flourishing; but he did not understand that nothing is more hurtful to commerce than absolute power. He could build ships by the labour of slaves; but he could not cause slaves to obtain the confidence of foreign capitalists.

Let us add, in reference to his travels, so much vaunted, that he has been condemned by the soundest reasoners. He went to consult the French, whose eyes were scarcely open to the light of reason; he studied the laws of Europe, in which the first elements of legislation were scarcely known; and he was blinded rather

than enlightened by the contradictory notions amassed by nations who called themselves learned, and who only in our days begin to emerge from chaos.

“Peter,” says the Abbé de Condillac, “might have observed in history the advantages and the vices of different governments, and thus he might have sought for instruction. The nations of Europe, badly governed and corrupt, could only lead him into error; their politeness and their arts were not what Russia required. Had there any where existed a nation well governed, I admit that his shortest mode would have been to have studied it. The Czar would then have acted wisely in travelling thither; and other princes of Europe would have done well to have followed his example.”

Of this reign, so superb, so laborious, so fatiguing, and so fundamental, what remained positive after Peter I.? Some establishments in favour of the navy. The seas of the north saw the Russian flag stream on ships of the line; but it is not true that the Russians had not yet navigated them. His father Alexis, without having gone to Saardam to inscribe himself on the list of carpenters, had constructed vessels; and even before that epoch the traders of Archangel and simple Cossacks, in their frail barks, had braved the White and Frozen Seas, which the hardiest seamen still dread.

The Russian people, crushed by taxes, constantly suffered and murmured amid the pompous enterprises of their despotic reformer. He had more need of agriculture than commerce, of farmers than sailors. However, vast fields lay waste, in order that Peter the Great might have the shadow of a navy. That navy remained in a weak state of infancy till the close of the last century; and Rulhière relates, that during the first war of Catherine II. against the Turks, when a Russian fleet arrived on the banks of the Thames, the sight of these lumbering vessels, of superannuated construction, the embarrassment of their manœuvres, and the clumsiness of the sailors, excited among the English inextinguishable laughter.

The great fame of Peter the Great is principally derived from his having made his country known to Europe. The French, prodigal of admiration for what is foreign, were struck with the qualities of a monarch who had made the occupation of a king the most laborious of all occupations. Moreover, the somewhat savage singularity of this northern potentate, the affectation of a coarse simplicity manifested throughout his person, even the remoteness of his dominions, and the vast extent of those regions, yet unknown, which composed them,—all concurred to shadow him forth in imposing proportions. And when, afterwards, the wits and academicians, *diamonded* and arrayed in rich furs by the successors of Peter, returned from Petersburg, vieing with each other in sounding the trumpet of unknown Russia, it was not difficult to believe them on their bare word.

It remains to remove another error not less accredited than many others about Peter I. He passes for having reformed, or rather renewed all the legislation of his empire : but that is false ; and in this respect Voltaire is completely contradicted by Levesque. He borrowed some laws from foreigners, says that writer ; but the greater part were, with justice, abrogated by his successors. As to his code, so celebrated, it never existed. He published a military code and a naval code ; but both were no more than a collection of administrative rules and measures. The word code, taken in its absolute sense, signifies a body of laws, a complete system of legislation ; and in that sense Peter never framed a code.

The reign of Peter the Great, to characterise it in a word, was a sort of *political paroxysm*, which ceased at his death, and left his empire really more feeble than he had received it from his ancestors. That impulsion pretended to be so great, and all those vast conceptions so ambitious of the future, did not pass beyond the narrowness of his grave. He had impressed no profound movement on the ideas of his people, and had not sufficiently fixed the lever of improvement in the national genius. Little remained of his factitious civilisation, and of his essays in English, French, and

German manners. The progress that the nation did make in new ideas and new manners, it would have made without him ; it would have made them without ostentation and display, without giving to Europe the spectacle of a grand masquerade ; and they would have been more stable.

What remained of him was his despotism, upreared on the ruins of the aristocracy and the ancient laws. In this respect he completed the revolution commenced by Ivan Vassielievitch, almost all whose ferocity he inherited. But, as we have already remarked, the destruction of feudalism in Russia had not the same happy result for the people as in the other states of Europe, where municipal corporations were established before monarchical centralisation. In Russia the people passed at once from the despotism of the nobles under the despotism of a czar or an emperor ; and since the ninth century they never had a moment's respite from the oppression they had undergone. They would, therefore, be the most miserable people on the earth, were they not of the number of those who, according to the beautiful expression of a writer of antiquity, have " degenerated even in servitude ;" and had they not lost all reminiscence of their ancient and happy existence, as well as been deprived of all feeling of their actual abjectness.

The most positive legacy of the reign of Peter the Great was the secret chancery ; a state inquisition which he strengthened and perfected, if he did not establish it. Other expedients of tyranny that he had invented were equally preserved ; it is a sort of inheritance that all absolute governments and all dynasties receive from each other with religious respect. He also transmitted a profound hatred for Popery and the Jesuits. He had received them at the solicitation of the emperor ; their intrigues and his quarrels with the Court of Vienna in 1719 induced him to expel them from all the towns in his dominions ; and the Catholic churches in Russia have since only been officiated in by Capuchins and Franciscans.

We may in truth say that, after Peter the First, the weight of the burden was altogether disproportioned to the strength of the

sovereigns of that empire. Women ascended that despotic throne with all the vices of their fragile nature, and wielded the mace of absolute power through the hands of their favourites. From 1725 to the end of the eighteenth century we have only to trace revolutions and catastrophes similar to those of the seraglios of Asia. Criminal pleasures blended with sanguinary plots; and from one day to the other we see glittering on the brow of the odious adulteress the diadem which parricidal hands had torn from the ensanguined head of kings. An insolent militia, more abject than the Strelitz, trafficked in the highest dignities and in the public fortune. Russia, oppressed and degraded under such masters, next lends its slavish hands to the dismemberment of a republic for a long time its rival, and which at least preserved in its neighbourhood the vestiges of ancient liberty. Notwithstanding this corruption in ancient morals, Russia, towards the close of the eighteenth century, became externally strong and formidable. The great crime consummated against Poland, and in the turpitude of which all Europe was steeped, whether from indifference or complicity, was wonderfully to her advantage, and prepared for her fresh advantages against Turkey. The active genius of that *female demon*, Catherine II., replaced Russia in the rank to which Peter I. had raised it for a moment. The rivalry of France and England, and the apathy of other cabinets, kept up and invigorated that prodigious advancing movement which now terrifies all. We cannot predict where the ascendancy of this new fortune will halt, which has twice paraded the Cossacks of the Don on the banks of the Seine; God only knows! But all Europe is enervated, disunited, and decomposed; everywhere we see governments at drawn daggers with the people, without being able to foresee the issue of this high controversy by the victory of opinion or the peace of all. Moreover, our noblest aspirations, as well as our dearest hopes, are smitten with death; life no longer throbs in our hearts; and what is now written is not believed. Vain efforts, useless conspiracies, which fortune has not put to account, have manifested universal degeneracy and

impotence. All the people who have performed great deeds appear equally unfitted for slavery or freedom. However, as the conservation of nations does not depend on their being spiritual and wealthy, what will be our destiny and that of Europe, if ever Russia, mistress of Constantinople, and floating her squadrons from the Sound to the Dardanelles, threw at once six hundred thousand Tatars on the roads of the west and the shores of the south? Would all the united capital of industrious England and wealthy France prove a barrier sufficient to repel so formidable an invasion?

The unmeasured follies of a disastrous man,* who might for a long period have confined Russia within her ice and snow, gave her the forward impulse of three centuries; and in the same ratio retarded the establishment of those liberal governments and that veritable civilisation which a philosophy of good faith would desire to realise. Is it, however, necessary to the permanent triumph of freedom that our children should add their misfortunes to those of their fathers, and like them be devoured by another crisis? Is it inevitable that the hordes of the north should return to devastate, impoverish, and ruin our rich countries, burn our cities, and mutilate our monuments? Must this old civilisation, so sterile in happiness and virtue, be reduced to powder, that new generations of poor and generous citizens may succeed the sophists and dupes of political economy? It is, perhaps, too true; great calamities can only give back a country, and the feelings which a love of country inspires, to masses of men who know no other temple than the Stock Exchange, no other passions but fear or a calculating prudence, no other instinct than self.

However disheartening the future which I presage with sadness, and whatever courage may be derived from the frightful hypothesis in which I have indulged, let me be excused these few lines, to attest the painful emotions by which my heart is penetrated. Those emotions I share with all who still preserve a spark of patriotism, and whose bosoms are still animated by a love of liberty.

* Reference is here made to the first Napoleon. J. D.

NOTE.

The subjoined document, on account of its historical importance, ought not to be omitted in a sketch of the character of Peter the Great. Having been overlooked by Rabbe, it is here supplied.—J. D.

THE WILL OF THE OZAR, PETER THE GREAT.

“In the name of the holy indivisible Trinity, we Peter, to all our successors greeting, &c. : The great God, who always enlightened us by His divine wisdom, allows me now to behold in the Russian nation the people chosen by Providence to govern the whole of Europe. Most of the European nations have already arrived at a state of extreme old age, and they must needs be regenerated by a new and youthful people, when the time for the latter shall have come,” &c.

Here follow the different maxims or items of the recipe to be observed :—

“1. The Russian nation is constantly to be kept in a state of war, and the warlike spirit of the Russian nation kept up.

“2. Distinguished generals belonging to the most civilised nations of Europe are to be called to Russia in time of war, and the very first artizans and men of letters in time of peace.

“3. Russia is on all possible occasions to intermeddle in European differences and affairs of all kinds ; in particular, however, she is to do so in those which concern Germany, on account of the proximity and more direct interest which is to be attached to that country.

“4. Poland is to be divided. This object in view will be effected by encouraging in that country party rivalries, and by constantly keeping up a state of internal discord. The most influential of the nobility are to be won over with gold ; the influence in the country, and at the elections of the kings, is to be maintained ; and every opportunity is to be eagerly laid hold of which affords a pretext to march Russian troops into the kingdom of Poland. In the event of the neighbouring powers raising difficulties, the country should be divided ; and whatever share of the spoil it may be found necessary then to grant to them may always be resumed hereafter, whenever a proper opportunity offers for the purpose.

“5. It is expedient to take as much territory as possible from Sweden ; must be separated from Denmark ; and a feeling of jealousy is constantly to be kept up between those two countries.

“6. The consorts of the Russian princes are always to be chosen from amongst the German princesses, in order to multiply the family connections.

“7. The alliance with England, for commercial reasons, is to be preferred to all other alliances. England requires our produce for its navy ; and it might moreover be made subservient to aid in the development of the maritime strength of Russia.

“8. It is necessary that the Russian empire should be continually extended towards the north, along the Baltic; and towards the south, along the shores of the Black Sea.

“9. It is expedient to draw as near as possible to Constantinople and to the East Indies. Whoever rules in these two countries is the true sovereign of the world. Wars are in consequence constantly to be waged, or caused to be waged, against Turkey and Persia; great colonies are to be established along the Euxine, in order to get in time the whole Black Sea into the Russian power. The same policy is to be followed with regard to the shores of the Baltic—two objects indispensable for the success of the above project.

“10. The Greeks, united and schismatical, who are spread over Hungary, Turkey, and Southern Poland, must be gained by favours to be bestowed on them, for it is expedient to win their sympathies for Russia. They must look up to us as their central point and their chief support. A generally preponderating influence is to be created by joining the principle of autocracy to a sort of spiritual supremacy combined and united in the person of the Czar. The Greeks will then be the friends of Russia, and our enemies will be theirs.

“11. When Sweden is weakened, Persia vanquished, Poland subjugated, Turkey conquered, and the Euxine and the Baltic guarded by Russian fleets, then secret proposals are first to be addressed to the French Court, and hereafter to the Court of Vienna, offering them to share with Russia the kingdom of the world. If one of those two great powers consents, from vanity or from flattered ambition, to entertain the proposal, then it must be made use of to suppress the other, and to annihilate all other powers; an undertaking that cannot fail of success, for by that time Russia will already be in possession of the whole of the east, and of the major part of Europe.

“12. Should, however, the impossible become true, and both powers unite in resisting the offer thus made, then it is expedient to incite them to strife with one another, and in this manner to exhaust their strength. Then Russian armies will first inundate Germany, then France, and in this way Europe will and must be conquered.”

CATHERINE THE FIRST.

We have said that Peter I. had changed the order of succession to the throne in use before his time, and substituted, in lieu of the law of primogeniture, the mere will and simple choice of the sovereign. It was a great step towards the establishment of despotism. It must also be observed that this measure was resolved

upon through hatred of Alexis, or through foresight of his incapacity. Peter even avowed this motive, when he thus established, as the fundamental law of the empire, the contingency of his preferences or caprices. To whom did he destine that throne of which he for ever wished to deprive the unfortunate Czarevitch? Every one in Russia presumed that it was to his wife Catherine; and this conjecture became a general opinion, when, in 1724, a year before his death, he caused her to be crowned with a display and pomp which, it is said, surpassed all that decorated the coronation of the ancient grand dukes. A manifesto, in which the services of Catherine were recorded, and particularly her fine conduct in the affair of the Pruth, was published and circulated to make known her claims to be seated on the throne by the side of the sovereign; and from that time none doubted but that she would remain on it after his death. But soon, when her intrigue with Moens was discovered, it may be presumed that her hopes vanished with the affections on which they were founded. Peter would not render his dishonour public; but, as we have seen, he did not fail to take vengeance. Moens was decapitated, and Catherine was dragged before the exposed body of her lover; from that time Peter never spoke to her but in public. He died a few months afterwards; whether of disease or poison, it is unknown. The rumour was generally accredited, that Catherine and Menzikoff had hastened his end. Voltaire remarks that there is too ordinary a propensity to impute great crimes to those who are interested in their commission, and this reflection is sound; nevertheless, in this instance we may be excused in deeming Catherine guilty. She had many reasons for being so: nothing was more doubtful than her future destiny; nothing more to be dreaded than the resentment, rather restrained than extinguished, in the heart of Peter the Great.

What seems to depose against Catherine and Menzikoff is, that at the moment the emperor expired, all their measures were taken for the proclamation of the princess. Peter, who did not think his end so near, had not time to express his last wishes. It is said

that he testified a desire to dictate them to the Princess Anne, the eldest of his daughters ; but when she arrived he was speechless. Others have declared that he wished to write, and could only trace these words, *Transfer all*. . . . These two words each party interpreted according to their own pleasure,—some in favour of Catherine, others in favour of the Princess Anne : and this last supposition was the more natural ; for that princess, beautiful, virtuous, of a superior and cultivated mind, was beloved by her father. An historian has stated that the lines penned by the dying Peter were very legible, and that they excluded his wife from the throne, to place on it the son of the unfortunate Alexis. According to that version, Menzikoff, Tolstoi, and Roumiantsof, present at the death of the emperor, suddenly resolved to suppress the document, fearing lest the son of Alexis might one day avenge the bad offices they had rendered to his father, in persuading him to return from Naples, and conducting him, with the blackest perfidy, under the knife of the Czar. It is added that, during the agony of Peter, a meeting of the high nobility assembled to place the crown on the head of that infant prince ; but that the dexterity of Menzikoff and the boldness of Catherine gave a totally different direction to the deliberations of that illustrious conclave. The empress ventured to harangue them ; she spoke with confidence and firmness of the rights conferred on her by her coronation, and protested that she only desired to ascend the throne in order to preserve it for Peter II., son of a prince whose unfortunate end she had been the first to deplore. It was bold to touch on that fatal subject, because she had been suspected of being privy to the crime ; but her language produced an impression, whether as a proof of innocence, or as the indication of uncommon firmness. Immense largesses, magnificent presents distributed among all the members of the assembly, completely shook their first resolution ; and the Archbishop of Novgorod, rising the first, swore to recognise Catherine as sole sovereign and empress of all the Russias. The whole meeting then rose simultaneously, as if hurried away

by his example. But, according to an historian whose testimony is very important, this first scene was only enacted in presence of some lords of the court and principal officers of the guard whom Menzikoff had hastily summoned, because their sentiments were known to him ; and it was not with equal assurance that Catherine appeared before the crowd of senators, boyars, and generals, who, on the news of Peter's death, flocking to the palace, loudly manifested their intention of giving to the empire a constitution similar to that of Sweden. Here was required less boldness and more tact ; consequently, Catherine began by putting in movement the regiments Preobajenski and Semenowski, who surrounded the palace and guarded all the approaches. The roll of the drum and the sound of arms interrupted this tumultuous council. People were struck with astonishment, and the empress suddenly appeared in the midst of them ; she said that, touched with the profound grief of the senate, herself overwhelmed with sorrow, and replete with zeal for the public welfare, she came to recommend to the senators the young grandduke Peter Alexievitch, and solemnly to pledge herself to educate him in a manner worthy of succeeding the great prince whose loss they deplored. When she had finished speaking, Menzikoff took up the discussion, and said that, in the presence of the queen, the deliberation of the Senate was illegal. The Senate was entrapped by this false air of loyalty, and Catherine retired. Then the Archbishop of Novgorod declared that the emperor had frequently expressed to him his desire of transmitting the sovereign authority to his wife ; and that after having saved the empire on the banks of the Pruth, she well deserved to govern it. The grand-chancellor Golovin proposed, as a preliminary measure, that the people should be consulted. The Count Apraxin, in his turn, spoke in favour of the young Peter, that precious scion of the blood of Romanoff. Then Menzikoff, turning with an air of authority towards the Archbishop of Novgorod, said, "What I learn from your lips decides the question. Lords and holy fathers, long live the Empress Catherine !" This accla-

mation was repeated by thousands of voices in the hall and courtyard of the palace. Catherine, surrounded by the nobles of the empire, showed herself to the people ; and the chiefs of the senate, of the army, and of the synod, proclaimed her Empress of all the Russias. Thus it was that the peasant girl of Marienbourg ascended the throne of Rourik and Peter the Great ; thus, in spite of some vain legal appearances, all in this affair was fraud, violence, or corruption.

Once on the throne, Catherine appeared willing to persuade the nation that the genius of Peter I. was not wholly buried in the tomb, and executed many useful works, the most praiseworthy of which was to make her will, with a view of removing the dangerous consequences of the law enacted by her husband. However, she was not free in that act ; Menzikoff, who flattered himself with the hope of surviving her, forced her to name the son of the Czarevitch her heir, with the express recommendation that he should marry the daughter of Menzikoff. If that prince died without issue, then the crown was to pass to Anne Petrowna, wife of the duke of Holstein, and to his posterity. After Anne, the Princess Elizabeth was named, and finally Natalia, daughter of the Czarevitch. The haughty favourite then thought that he had enchained fortune ; and he was on the eve of experiencing its most bitter fickleness.

When Catherine thus disposed of the empire, a secret malady was urging her to the tomb ; an ulcer in the lungs was spoken of, then a cancer ; next it was said that she was killing herself by drinking Tokay. Those acquainted with all the perversenesses of courts have thought that Menzikoff retained for her some of the poison they had jointly administered to Peter. The positive proof of so many horrors nowhere exists ; but it is long, in these sad annals, that we have passed from crime to crime ; and the sequel will prove still more strongly that every thing may be admitted in this frightful history. Levesque says, that not to reject this last supposition is the act of those who take pleasure in infusing the venom of their imagination into all the pages of history ; but if he

himself did not believe in the justice of this imputation, why, in alluding to it, has he furnished so many inducements to error, so many excuses to calumny?

1727. Catherine reigned alone during two years, and died at thirty-eight years of age, crushed by the despotism of Menzikoff, and perhaps undermined by the remorse of seeing herself his accomplice. Her yoke had seemed light; for, limiting herself to the enjoyment of power, protected by foreigners, whom she salaried at great cost and rewarded by important offices, she allowed affairs to take their course. The nobles in possession of the first dignities of the state, while pillaging, vaunted the equitable wisdom of her administration. The provinces recently conquered were, however, treated with mildness; exiles were recalled; the criminal laws were relaxed in their severity; and the reduction of legal taxes silenced those oppressed by arbitrary exactions. Even the men who gave umbrage, and who were removed from the court, received an indemnity in honourable employments; in short, this momentary reign contented every one, except the people, who were universally oppressed. This celebrated woman could neither read nor write; her daughter Elizabeth signed for her, and signed her will. General Gordon, who had long served Peter I., has sketched her portrait in a curious and lively style: "She was," says he, "a very pretty woman, and of good mien; possessing good sense, but destitute of lofty understanding and vivacity of imagination, which many persons have attributed to her. The chief reason why the Czar was so fond of her was her excessive good temper. She never for a moment evinced chagrin or caprice. Obliging and polite with all, she never forgot her original condition." Menzikoff had affianced his daughter to Peter II., and projected the alliance of his son with Natalia, sister of the youthful sovereign. To realise his plans, it was necessary that he should be sole master; consequently, despising the authority of the Council of Regency, composed by the deceased empress, he seized on the person of the prince, and dictated exclusively his own will and pleasure. So

much boldness and pride met its reward ; and the nobles, whom he humbled and outraged by the new splendour of his fortune, by so much prosperous iniquity,—the duke of Holstein, husband of the Princess Anne, Dolgoroucki, Golitzin, Goloffkin, Tolstoi, Bourtoulin, Bassevitz, Ostermann, and the Portuguese Du Vier, who directed the secret chancery of the police,—all, his enemies as well as his most obsequious flatterers,—plotted his ruin, with the intention of placing on the throne Anne, eldest daughter of Catherine, and married to the duke of Holstein. This project failed. The majority of its authors were sent to Siberia ; others underwent the knout. But finally the Dolgoroucki family, more fortunate, contrived to gain the favour of the young prince, and Menzikoff succumbed. Stripped of his property and all his honours, he was sent to Siberia, where his wife became blind through weeping. The history of Menzikoff is too well known to render it necessary here to state more than that he was a pastrycook's apprentice. He came from afar, but he fell from a lofty elevation. However, he displayed firmness and grandeur of soul in his disgrace, which is astonishing in a man so basely enamoured of power and gold. He had been a robber all his life ; and Peter I., who had a hundred times cudgelled him for his malversations, usually finished by saying, “Menzikoff will always be Menzikoff.” The Dolgoroucki family succeeded to the power of Menzikoff ; and, like him, conceived the design of marrying Peter to a princess of their house. The sudden death of the latter, cut off by the small-pox at fourteen years of age, deceived their hopes.

REIGN OF ANNE IVANOUNA.

1730 to 1740. From the hand of a child the sceptre of the Russian monarchs again passed into that of a woman. Scions of the elder branch of Romanoff existed ; they were two daughters of Ivan. The younger was selected, to the exclusion of the other, because the latter was at Moscow ; and some time was desired to prepare the shadow of a political compact with the throne, and raise

up before it some barriers. The opportunity seemed favourable, because the Princess Anne, dowager duchess of Courland, was remarkable for a gentleness of disposition which promised time for mature deliberation. But she was not wanting in advisers who opened her eyes to this conspiracy against absolute power. Ostermann, whose intriguing activity had greatly contributed to secure the throne for her, could not allow her prerogatives to be touched. Thus the articles presented by the high council, and to the observance of which the princess had sworn, and also signed, were in his eyes only a revolutionary trap when he saw her on the throne. However, the people lost nothing by this violation of the sovereign's promises; for the aristocracy, in their plan of political reform, only laboured for themselves.

Ostermann was the son of a Lutheran clergyman, and by his talents had become chancellor of the empire. Another foreigner then rose in favour of the sovereign, and did much more harm to Russia: it was Biren. This sanguinary man, who wielded as full an extent of power as an Ivan the Fourth or a Peter the First had arrogated to themselves, was the grandson of a groom in the stables of James the Third, duke of Courland. He stained the steps of the Russian throne with the blood of the prime nobility, to avenge himself for not having been admitted among the aristocratic order of Courland. We cannot enumerate the number of unfortunates who perished under punishment, or who were sentenced to the most rigorous exile, under his frightful administration. The sovereign, become his slave, received his orders, and more than once prostrated herself at his feet to moderate his atrocities. Such is power with feeble and corrupt sovereigns; it becomes the public and terrible property of the first scoundrel who knows how to please in secret. Anne was naturally mild and humane; she desired the happiness of her people. All that she required to accomplish them, were the morals of a virtuous woman; which were of small account in this august rank in Russia, if we may judge from all that remains authentic in its history.

Anne Ivanouna was ambitious of the glory of military successes, and aspired to support the influence exercised by Peter the Great, her uncle, over the destinies of Poland, in forcing the Diet to recognise Augustus the Third, elector of Saxony, to the prejudice of Stanislaus Leczinski. She succeeded, through the dexterity of Munich. She was no less favoured by fortune in her enterprises against the Tatars and Turks: but these victories cost her her best troops; and at the close, in order to obtain peace, she (1740) saw herself reduced to sacrifice all her conquests on the Black Sea, on the Palus Mœotis, and the Euxine. She also ceded to Tamasp Kouli-Khan* the Persian provinces conquered at great cost by Peter the First, and whose conservation had only been onerous to the state. She had intended to have imitated her grandfather in his plans of civil reform, by diffusing the intelligence and the politeness of Europe. By a solemn edict, published in 1737, she ordered all young gentlemen to learn arithmetic and writing, reading and dancing.

Biren had not been the first of her lovers; he had only succeeded the famous Count of Saxe, distinguished by his heroic qualities in love as in war; and it was also through the favour of that princess that the former succeeded in obtaining the sovereignty of his country. Anne was, nevertheless, scrupulous in religion. A very singular example of her severity is cited, of which a Prince Golitzin, who had become a Catholic in his travels, was the victim. She compelled him to marry a washerwoman, and to consummate his marriage on a bed of ice, and in a palace of ice. This happened in the winter of 1740. Among the princes of this nation, ferocity was never exempt from extravagance; and the punishments inflicted by them were always of a

* The famous Nadir Shah. Sir John Malcolm, in his *History of Persia*, vol. ii. p. 2, says that Kouli means "slave," and Nadir "wonderful," and that the latter term is used as an epithet to describe the Almighty. When he was promoted by the favour of Shah Tamasp to the dignity of khan, he took the name of that monarch, and was named Tamasp Kouli-Khan; but on reaching the throne he styled himself Nadir Shah. J. D.

burlesque character, when an ocean of blood did not efface every other impression than that of horror.

Anne died of gout, in delirium, and even, it is said, tormented by remorse. She fancied she saw around her bed the bleeding images of her victims ; for those of Biren were hers. She was a weak woman : women more firm succeeded her, and, as we shall see, those whom remorse never approached. Anne, by her first will, had called to the throne her niece, the Duchess of Mecklenbourg, married to the Duke of Brunswick Lunebourg. During the course of the malady which terminated her days, Biren and his creatures took advantage of the prostration of her faculties to make her sign a new will in favour of the son of that niece, named Ivan, whose tender age rendered a regency indispensable. The senate, the clergy, all the nobles, in emulation of each other, signed a petition praying Biren to accept it ; and this petition was presented to him by Ostermann, by whom it was framed. He had become the favourite of Biren. Inflated with his new power, Biren weighed down upon all that surrounded him a yoke still more galling. Its pressure and horrors soon became insupportable. The rivalry of Duke Ulric of Brunswick Lunebourg, whose rights as the father of the future sovereign, his son, Ivan the Third, Biren exclusively usurped,—and the jealousy of Munich, who possessed great influence through his high military reputation, frustrated in the hope of sharing an authority which Biren's party owed to him,—were the causes of the fall of this man, let us rather say of this monster. Suddenly arrested and thrown into the fortress of Schlussembourg, he only quitted it for the deserts of Siberia, there to hear the maledictions of the victims with whom he had peopled them.

1741. The Duchess of Brunswick succeeded to the regency, and her husband took the chief command of the troops. Munich was at the head of the council and the ministry ; but the jealous suggestions of Ostermann soon induced the regent to deprive him of the direction of affairs. This act of ingratitude

was also one of blind imprudence. She lost her firmest support.

However feeble and stormy had been the administration of these different sovereigns who had so rapidly succeeded each other since the time of Peter the First, the remains of the splendour with which that prince had surrounded his reign shone on those of his successors, and his name still resounded in distant countries. Under the regency of the Duchess of Brunswick, the ambassadors of Tamasp Kouli-Khan, or Shah Nadir, the fortunate usurper of the power of the Persian monarchs, came to Moscow, to demand for their master the hand of the Princess Elizabeth. The fame of her beauty had reached the ear of this conqueror. An entire army followed the ambassadors, and the presents they brought were worthy of the vast power of their master; fourteen elephants and jewels of inestimable value were presented from him to the princess. His proposal was rejected; but, apparently to soothe this species of affront, his presents were retained.

However, the disorderly conduct of the regent, fruit of her passion for the Count Lynar, the misunderstanding which was not slow to arise between her and her husband, and that which existed between the two ministers Goloffkin and Ostermann, prepared a new revolution. The Princess Elizabeth, absorbed by devotion and love, would perhaps never have dreamed of the throne, had not the activity of an intriguing subaltern,* aided by the policy of the French ambassador, snatched her for a moment from her disgraceful pleasures, to make her sensible of the short

* The French surgeon, Lestocq. He was imprudent, indiscreet, and unguarded, and his boastings almost rendered the plot abortive. The majority of the other conspirators were drunkards, incapable of keeping a secret; Elizabeth herself could not conceal it; finally, every thing entered into this conspiracy to ensure its failure. But it succeeded, because the errors of the court were still greater than those of the conspirators. One day the Count Ostermann, sick, was carried to the regent to inform her of the secret conferences of Lestocq with the Marquis de la Chetardie. She listened abstractedly; and, instead of answering him, amused herself with showing him a dress she had just received for the little emperor.

distance which separated her from the throne. She dared not, however, leap over that space till retreat was impossible. The imprudent precipitancy of the principal author of the plot had disclosed its ramifications; the regent, warned of the conspiracy, had interrogated Elizabeth, and, dissuaded by the pretended tears of the latter, had suspended all further inquiries. It is rare to see, in a court, a woman deceived by the tears of another.* The guards Preobajenski, whom the habitual marks of familiar affability had attached to this princess, and from whose lowest ranks she had not disdained to select the first object of her tenderness (1741), readily declared in her favour. Moreover, the gold furnished by La Chetardie had seduced the greatest number of them. The policy and design of this ambassador, in aiding Elizabeth to ascend the throne, was to prepare her alliance with France, and destroy at St. Petersburg the rival influence of Maria Theresa. The regent was confined with her husband in the castle of Schlussembourg; and the young Ivan, her son, also passed, but with the smile of happy ignorance, from his cradle to a prison, which was to be perpetual. Munich, Ostermann, Goloffkin, at first condemned to death, were exiled.

REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

Elizabeth, solemnly proclaimed, conspicuously displayed her gratitude to the founders of her fortune. All the grenadiers of the regiment Preobajensky were ennobled. This impolitic reward exalted the insolence of this prætorian rabble to such a pitch, that, in their ferocious drunkenness, they demanded the massacre of all foreigners in St. Petersburg. Such was still the barbarism of the Russian nation. Revolutions so rapid, and the

* Lestocq, apprised of the conversation which Elizabeth had had with the regent, repaired on the following morning to the princess. He found on her table a drawing representing a crown and a wheel; and, presenting the drawing to the princess, he said, "No middle term, madam; there is one for you, the other for me." This blunt remark fixed all the irresolution of Elizabeth.

very easy success of all ambitious men who aspired to power, but especially the example of the intrigue which had seated Elizabeth on the throne in so sudden a manner, were calculated to expose that throne to daily attacks, and prepare the downfall of that indolent princess. A conspiracy, of which the Austrian ambassador Botta was the first instigator, was not slow in being formed ; but his departure to Vienna having deprived the conspirators of the soul of their counsels and of their rallying point, they delayed to execute what they ought to have precipitated, and were discovered.

Madame Lapoukin, one of the handsomest women in Russia, whom the ties of blood attached to several exiles, and those of love to Lœvenholden, formerly the lover of Catherine, and also banished to Siberia, had taken a very active part in this conspiracy. She underwent the punishment of the knout. By a refinement in cruelty, Elizabeth would not allow her to perish under the blows of the executioner, but caused her to live horribly mutilated, punishing in her less the crime of having conspired against her power, than the more unpardonable one of having surpassed her in beauty. What adds to the atrociousness of this vengeance was the fact of Madame Lapoukin being pregnant. It is even affirmed that Elizabeth fed her eyes with this frightful spectacle, heard the shrieks of her victim, and counted the blows, each of which tore away ensanguined masses of flesh.

Through her imperious passion for pleasure, as well as by her rare beauty, Elizabeth recalled to mind Catherine her mother ; but she was far from reproducing any of those grand qualities which redeemed the weaknesses of the latter. In her insatiable craving after voluptuousness, disdaining the constraint and the sanctity of marriage vows, she reckoned a very considerable number of favourites. The first was Alexis Razoumoffsky, who, from a simple grenadier, became, in her arms, Grand Huntsman of the Crown, and whose brother was made hetman of the Cossacks of the Ukraine. Tastes more odious, passions more degrading

than those of pleasure, of the table and of wine, soon deprived this princess of all dignity, all character. She had no other will than that of her favourites and her ministers. The treasures of the state were given up to the depredations of Ivan Schouvaloff, the skilful flatterer of her pride, the same who induced Voltaire to write his life of Peter the Great; and whom that great man, in the lengthened prostitution of his pen, did not blush to honour with praises which he never merited. Bestucheff, who never possessed over Elizabeth the rights which love confers, was, nevertheless, of all her political advisers, the one who exercised the longest and the most marked influence. Old in the intrigues of courts, instructed by his different travels, having at first shared the detested fortunes of Biren, and had the dexterity to escape his fate, presented afterwards to Elizabeth by the same Lestocq whose fortunate boldness had effected the last revolution, the first use that he made of his credit was to destroy his benefactor. Sold to Austria and England, he obtained the recal of the French ambassador, La Chetardie, whom he hated, and whom he had even attempted to assassinate.

1744. Elizabeth was then engaged in naming her successor; and in the choice she made of Peter, son of the Duke of Holstein Gottorp and of Anne, daughter of Peter the First, she deprived the family of Anne Ivanouna of all hope. This young prince had arrived at Petersburg, and had already, with the flattering prospect of the throne before him, made a sacrifice of his religion, which was Lutheran, when the vote of the Senate of Stockholm called him to the throne of Sweden, vacant by the great age and infirmity of Frederick the First. He gave a preference to that of Russia, which his destiny was about to render fatal. Peter soon married Sophia Augusta, of Anhalt-Zerbst, afterwards too famous under the name of Catherine Alexiowna, which she took on embracing the Greek religion. At that time it was generally thought that the king of Prussia had negotiated this marriage; but more private motives determined Elizabeth to con-

clude it. She saw in the young Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst the niece of a man whom she had passionately loved in her early youth, and who had been destined for her husband; and it is said she was struck with the singular resemblance between Alexiewna and that regretted lover, her uncle: he was the Prince Holstein Eutin, brother of the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst.* The latter, ambitious and a mother, skilfully took advantage of the empire of these tender reminiscences over the mind of Elizabeth, to ensure to her daughter the flattering title of grand duchess. This union appeared at first formed under a happy star; the young couple seemed enamoured of each other; but the small-pox destroyed this felicity, in depriving the prince of a countenance with which he had pleased. This terrible change rendered him insupportable to his young companion; but, already versed in the arts of dissimulation, she concealed the horror he inspired: it was a sacrifice made to her ambition. At an age so tender, Alexiewna was no stranger to those passions which she afterwards carried to so unbridled an excess. From this moment she became the principal and most interesting personage on this theatre. She was at once the centre and the end of all movements; and, in the character she exhibited, in all the details of her conduct, we may already remark the necessary causes of the great events which we shall soon have to describe. We shall now throw a last glance over the reign which finishes in preparing her own, and seek, in an examination of the administration of Elizabeth, the opinion that posterity ought to form of that princess.

Elizabeth, on ascending the throne, found the Swedish war in full activity. That war had been fomented by France, who wished to occupy Russia, to prevent its interference with the grand

* A princely German house, one of the humblest, formed in the sixteenth century by a prince descended from the ancient electors of Saxony. At the close of the sixteenth century, the house of Anhalt, strictly so called, was divided into four branches by the death of Joachim Ernest, tenth Prince of Anhalt. These four houses were Anhalt-Dessau, Anhalt-Bernbourg, Anhalt-Göthen, and Anhalt-Zerbst.

quarrel of the Austrian succession.* Moreover, Sweden was easily flattered with the hope of recovering some of her losses, on seeing the inheritance of Peter the Great troubled by the frequent revolutions of the palace which commenced on the death of that monarch. However, through the ability and impetuous activity of General Lascy, the Russians, far from forfeiting the renown gained at Pultawa, had already gained fresh advantages before the close of the regency of the Princess Anne of Brunswick. Under the Empress Elizabeth, Lascy prosecuted the war with so much energy and success, that the Swedes, failing in magazines and resources, showed, moreover, so little conduct and valour, that they were compelled to evacuate Finland in disgrace. They abandoned Fridriks-Hamm when the Russians were preparing to besiege it. (1742.) Fortified, to the number of seventeen thousand, in entrenchments which appeared impregnable, they capitulated on dishonourable conditions, delivering their arms and horses to Marshal Lascy, who had only the same number of soldiers, and who could not have attacked them without rashness. Here, it may be incidentally observed, is a grave subject for reflection; for certainly the Swedes have always been renowned as the bravest of the northern nations. It might be said, that the national genius had been buried in the tomb of Charles XII., that king of glory and misfortune; that king whose parallel nations should never again desire to behold. He it was who caused these defeats; and the disgrace of the days of Willmanstrand (1741) and of Fridriks-Hamm ought to be regarded as the complement of his punishment. However, the bravest nations have their unlucky moments, and, as individuals, do not always maintain the same elevation of courage. This proves that we ought not too much to boast of the favourable chances of war, and that a certain description of national pride is the least excusable of any. Elizabeth soon granted peace to her adversaries by forcing them to accept for king a Bishop of Lubeck (1743), who,

* Eichhorn.

in truth, was at the same time a Duke of Holstein. Thus was realised the favourite scheme of Catherine I., who had eagerly desired to give the throne of Sweden to that family.

By virtue of the same treaty of peace, Elizabeth seized on a large portion of Finland, which, to that extent, removed St. Petersburg from the frontiers of its turbulent neighbours.*

After the close of this war against Sweden, the intrigues of Botta prevented the Empress from sending succours to the Queen of Hungary, the immortal Maria Theresa, for the maintenance of the Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VI.† It was only when Elizabeth had obtained from the court of Austria the satisfaction she demanded against the minister Botta, instigator of the conspiracy of which we have spoken, that, by virtue of an alliance, offensive and defensive, she sent thirty-seven thousand men to Maria Theresa. The arrival of this army on the frontiers of Germany gave more activity to the negotiations; and the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle arrived in time to dispense with the Russians fighting. Thus were maintained and augmented the political consideration and importance of Russia, by the fatal want of foresight in the European powers, which invited her to their disputes. But within, for want of a vigorous hand, the administration fell into disorder; and the remnant of ancient public maxims perished, submerged under new corruption. In the manners of the court, there was no modesty; in the acts of power, no humanity.

If ever a glorious title was unworthily usurped, it was, without doubt, that of *Very Merciful Princess*, which Elizabeth assumed. On ascending the throne, she had sworn not to punish with death any of her subjects; and deceived Europe proclaimed her humanity. But there is no humanity in substituting tortures for death; and the truth is, that royal vengeance lost nothing by

* Collection of twenty-three curious documents concerning Sweden and Russia. (Dantzic, 1742.)

† That is, for the maintenance of the integrity of the house of Austria.

this universal law of the commutation of punishment. In abolishing the penalty of death, Elizabeth retained the torture of the wheel, ordinary and extraordinary. The public works, to which those capitally condemned were put, caused punishments more frightful than death. Finally, in spite of this appearance or this simulated desire of clemency, the prisons during this reign were crowded with unfortunates, who perished while demanding to be tried; and 20,000 exiles, sacrificed to the security of the throne, were sent to Siberia, there to expire of misery and cold. The nobles continued to exercise the inhuman right of inflicting on their peasants the punishment of the *battok*, or club, almost as cruel as that of the knout.*

Of all the ordinances of this vaunted princess, as the happy products of a truly philanthropic mind, that which prohibited the natives from maltreating foreigners is perhaps the most remarkable; however, it is natural to see in it rather an act of policy than an idea of humanity. Humanity only received her homage in the mendacious concoction of her edicts. Elizabeth made concessions to the spirit of her age, without ceasing to obey the savage manners of her country. Under the vain ostentation of grandeur of soul, there was nothing but ferocity and bad faith. She had formally promised to restore the regent to liberty, and condemned her to exile. Munich himself, as the reward of his services, was banished to Siberia; and Madame Lapoukin was assassinated through jealousy, through female rivalry.

* The knout is a strap of thick and hard leather, about three feet and a half long, attached to a stick two feet in length, by means of a ring which allows it play. This leather strap being square, the angles are sharp. The sufferer, his shirt taken off, is placed on the back of an assistant of the executioner; the latter strikes with so much force, that blood flows at every stroke, and a lump rises on the flesh as large as a man's finger. The masters in this science of torture are so dexterous in Russia, that it seldom happens they strike twice following on the same spot; and they can at pleasure kill their victim in three blows, or give him a great number without producing death. There is also another mode of administering the knout, but it is so horrible that we abstain from mentioning it.

Elizabeth was gallant and devout ; but her devotion was a cruel bigotry, and her gallantry a shameless libertinage. “ More than once,” says Levesque, whom we cannot suspect of too much severity, “ she sought her lovers among the lowest classes of the nation. I have even heard it said that she had the fancy to introduce into her bed a Calmuck, rather tickled than disgusted by the peculiar ugliness of that people. It must be felt,” adds Levesque, “ that these scandalous anecdotes have no other foundation than vague rumours.”*

Amidst this debauched life, Elizabeth was indignant when any infraction of ecclesiastical discipline was communicated to her. To eat meat, butter, or eggs, in Lent, was a crime by her never pardoned. Blasphemers had their tongues torn out ; but the slightest bantering allusion to the turpitudes of the palace was placed on the footing of the most odious blasphemy.

Will any one boast of an administration, of a reign in which the secret chancery, and all varieties of torture, existed ? Would it not be mockery to speak of the clemency of a sovereign, who could not be applied to when sick, through fear of committing a crime against the state ?

During this vaunted epoch of Elizabeth, the nation, still shuddering with fear, could not re-assure itself ; because it felt that to the reign of Peter the Great had succeeded a despotism not less rigorous, an inquisition still more prying. The Russians lived in distrust and anxiety, having to ask every morning what new tyrant had enjoyed the embraces of the empress. Happily, and through a just retaliation, the terror which issued from the gates of the palace entered it again through a hundred avenues, in spite of the vigilant guard which watched them all. And in this

* Why, then, narrate them ? Why give historical sanction to rumours which may only prove to be calumnies ? Vain palliative of condemnatory truths ! No ; there is no *perhaps* here : and all the world knows that the great mean to success with the Empresses of Russia was usually the strength of a Hercules rather than the grace of an Adonis ; and muscular vigour is a very plebeian quality.

respect, at least, the destiny of Elizabeth did not belie the fate which the justice of God usually reserves for tyrants.

Her miserable popularity with soldiers, the unmeasured favours she heaped on those nobles to whom she owed her elevation, did not assure her mind against the fear of a sudden change, of a fatal fall. Distrust and suspicion pursued her last days; her pleasures were disturbed; and she often feared to behold an assassin in the favourite who shared her bed! The approach of death filled her with a dread which conscience, as much as the feebleness of her character, inspired; and the superstition dominant in her soul afforded no consolation.

REIGN OF PETER THE THIRD.

If death had not cut short the secret designs of Elizabeth, Peter III. would probably not have succeeded her. On arriving at Petersburg, that prince found a crowd of enemies, whom his unexpected fortune had raised up; and he created others by imprudent conduct. He had brought among the Russians, German manners and prejudices. A vain enthusiasm for military glory had induced him to take Frederick of Prussia for a model; and he ridiculously imitated him in the details to which art and genius are forced to descend, but where they do not halt. By dressing in the Prussian uniform, by exercising in Prussian tactics his guard of Oranienbaum, Peter fancied he was walking in the footsteps of a great man, and fathoming the secrets of his profession. The easiness of his character gave him up to those who wished to remove him from the throne, by destroying him in the opinion of the empress. Bestucheff was the soul of that party: he feared to see supreme power pass into the hands of a prince whose rights to the throne of Russia he had formerly contested. Other motives established a marked opposition between his plans and opinions and the views of Peter III. The young courtiers, whom the supple genius of this minister had long directed, succeeded in fixing on the prince all the defects and vices of which they chose to

accuse him; and of blackening him in the eyes of Elizabeth, whose weaknesses and irregularities did not dispose her to be indulgent to her successor. Drawn daily more and more into the snare stretched out for him, Peter, thanks to his companions in debauchery, soon became familiar with all the gross vices and disgusting habitudes, which even a low condition, and the want of primary education, scarcely excuse in men in the lowest class of society. Wanting judgment, and even instinct, the Czar nevertheless thought that in thus vilifying himself, he only yielded to a very excusable taste for that sort of rudeness, or military bravado, which the blackguards of glory mistake for the veritable *ton* of the profession. However, whatever were the number of his enemies, raised up by reasons of private interest, or simply by opinion, the people always saw in Peter III. the last scion of Peter I. The faction opposed to his rights, and which Bestucheff had created, and for a long time directed, still subsisted in spite of the disgrace of the old courtier. Other leaders had succeeded him in his arduous career; but the moment had not yet arrived when the union of new interests, or the efforts of new factions, cemented by the audacious Machiavellism of Catherine, were to render that princess sufficiently powerful to precipitate her unfortunate husband from the throne.

Henceforward, full of her schemes, she flattered all vanities, all prejudices; seduced the nobles, the clergy, the people, and mixed up political intrigues with affairs of the heart; for it must be remarked, that the success of her ambitious plans never cost her the sacrifice of any vice, and that her very corruption created her grandeur. Disgusted with her husband,—a smoker, a drunkard, and a gamester,—and seeking compensation in illicit indulgences, she had, in a short time, progressed far. Four or five lovers had succeeded each other in the arms of this young grand-duchess, already a woman strong in her temperament, and who, feeling keenly, proportioned her consolations to her unhappiness. The first was Soltikoff, chamberlain of the prince, and by him ordered

to amuse his wife with ingenious festivals, during the languor of a feigned malady. The penetrating curiosity of the courtiers discovered the mystery of the supposed illness ; however, the effrontery of the lovers mocked at the stupidity of the prince, who saw no wrong ; and, irritated at the accusations with which *malevolence* (?) pursued his favourite, he defended his chamberlain, and maintained him in his office, amidst the bitter derision of the whole court.* Elizabeth was also the more easily per-

* It was a common opinion in Russia, that Paul Petrovitz, born at this epoch (1754), was the fruit of this intercourse. Writers who lived at the time, and possessed every facility of obtaining authentic information, have recorded facts to substantiate that opinion ; but the refined delicacy of our age forbids the publication of details. It can only be stated in general terms that morality was banished from the imperial and aristocratic circles of Russia, though the domestic virtues found a safe asylum in the hovels of serfdom. Despotism implies irresponsibility in the political acts of government ; but Catherine, who was a murderess, felt herself absolved from any tie to God or man. She repudiated every restraint on her ambition, her avarice, or her lust. A false indulgence to human baseness weakly imagines that her vices have been exaggerated, or painted in colours too *brilliantly black* ; but they who are minutely acquainted with history are compelled to acknowledge, with whatever reluctance, that in the imperfect or fallen nature of man, he is prone to sink into the deepest abysses of turpitude, when he drifts away from the moorings and sheet-anchor of religion. Now among the higher classes of Russia, during the reign of Catherine, vital religion had no existence, or certainly no influence ; no other obedience was required than obedience to the earthly power seated on the throne ; and if any approach to piety was exercised or commanded by ukase, it was only paraded in the meretricious pomp of the theatrical festivals of the Church. Had the vices of Catherine and their disastrous consequences been made notorious to the world in all languages, perhaps Poland might not have been invaded in order that the accomplices of her crimes might find in its spoils what impoverished Russia could not offer to their cupidity. Such an historical exposure might have saved modern Spain from the rule of a Christina, and rescued her daughter from the pollutions in which that young queen has been immersed. And, under such views, may it not be presumed that the cause of morality is better served by unveiling rather than by concealing even the most repulsive lineaments of vice ? Is not publicity the safeguard of justice, and does it not invigorate both public and private virtue ? The complete solution of this delicate problem may be difficult, although it has long been confessed that “history is philosophy

suaded, because she troubled herself little about morals, provided there was no scandal, and lubricity was masked by some bigotry. Moreover, she was completely brutified by strong liquors; from one morning to another she was almost always in a constant bacchic ecstasy. She could not bear to be dressed; in the morning, at her rising, her women loosely attached to her some robes, which a few cuts of the scissors disengaged in the evening.

Soltikoff abused a fortune so complaisant, and saw himself in an instant overthrown. His disgrace was the work of Chancellor Bestucheff, who desired to advance from the favourite to the master—destroy the former to seize on the latter, in order to maintain himself in all the offices he had accumulated in his own hands, and which made him the most powerful man in the empire. It is said that the empress regretted her first lover, till the young Poniatowski, who was to be the second, appeared at St. Petersburg.* The happiness of this latter was still more ephemeral, probably because he was more indiscreet. His fatuity exceeded all bounds. Elizabeth ordered him to quit Russia, and he obeyed; but the passion of the grand-duchess and the policy of Bestucheff soon caused him to return. Poniatowski reappeared at St. Petersburg in the quality of minister plenipotentiary of the Republic and King of Poland at the court of the Empress Elizabeth. Henceforth Catherine, throwing aside all prudence, used so little reserve, that the young Pole was openly spoken of as the

teaching by examples." These remarks, however, may be addressed to those who feel inclined to censure the account given of the reign of Catherine the Second in this volume. Voltaire has decorated her with a garland of the purest flowers, and deceived the world; is it not right to point to the venomous serpent concealed in the *bouquet*?

* Born a private gentleman, and without fortune, but gifted with a fine person, and full of ambition, Poniatowski travelled some time in Germany and France in inquietude and vain hopes. He succeeded at first tolerably at Paris, where the friendship of the Swedish ambassador procured him distinguished connexions. However, Poniatowski contracted debts, was imprisoned, and was indebted for his release to the kindness of the celebrated Madame Geoffrin.

father of the Princess Anne, of whom the grand-duchess was soon confined, and who died almost in her birth.*

Such were the preludes to a reign which finished in a manner so tragic and so dreadful. The courtiers—and among them must be included the highest names—witnesses of the degradation of their masters, despised and yet basely flattered them; no sincere or generous voice resounded through the ranks of that nobility to warn a wretched prince, alone ignorant of his dishonour, and whom they thus steeped in ridicule one day, to destroy him with poison, to assassinate him, without fear of public pity and indignation. The people also saw these disorders; but they only dared by silent looks to denounce such appalling scandals, thinking, perhaps, that crime and bad morals formed part of the privileges of power. So well, says an historian, so well are the Russian people fitted and formed for slavery. Peter III. was apprized at last; and fiercely fulminated forth his violent rage at the recital of his wife's infidelity. He hastened to the empress to demand vengeance, and caused Bestucheff to be removed, as having favoured the excesses of the grand-duchess. This great chancellor was immediately deprived of his place, and declared guilty of *lèse majesté*, for having given Field-Marshal Apraxin orders to evacuate Prussia, which the Russian army had invaded. These orders, however, were only given at the instigation of the grand-duke, who suffered by the victories of a people over whom he was to reign against a sovereign whom he had already chosen as a model; and yet it was himself who, on this point as well as the other, denounced Bestucheff. Thus fell, entangled in his own snares, the most skilful of intriguers and the most artificial of men.

From that time the grand-duchess, openly menaced with the vengeance of her husband, saw herself abandoned by all the courtiers. She demanded an audience of the empress, and was refused. In her consternation she applied to the French ambassador, who enjoyed a high consideration at the court of St. Petersburg, to plead her cause. That minister would not undertake a mission which

* Castera, *Mémoires Secrets du Colonel Masson*.

he regarded at the outset as fruitless. Thus the princess at once failed in every quarter. Soon she was obliged to follow her husband to Oranienbaum, who did not disguise his hatred, and whom she equally detested. Poniatowski penetrated several times into this castle, in various disguises; but one day he was discovered, arrested, and Peter III. was at first resolved to hang him. The empress was induced to interpose her authority; and the prince, throwing aside his anger, only saw the humorous side of this adventure, and was the first to laugh at it. Such was the deplorable fickleness of his impressions.

1759. The war against the king of Prussia was resumed with more activity; and the generals who replaced the dismissed Apraxin frequently defeated the Prussians, seized their strong places, and finally made the star of Frederick the Second wax pale at Kunesdorff, where thirty-two thousand men lost their lives. The Russians, or rather the Austro-Russians, since the Austrian and Russian armies had combined their forces, made 7000 prisoners, took 27 standards and 160 pieces of cannon, with all the baggage of the Prussian army. In the following year, the Russians, under the command of Tottleben, entered the capital of the king of Prussia (1762); and at the moment when Elizabeth expired, the news of the capture of Colberg, the last rampart of that prince, and perhaps the last asylum of his fortune, reached St. Petersburg. Foreign affairs underwent an absolute change as soon as Peter III. was on the throne; he hastened to evacuate the Prussian territory, and to sign peace with Frederick, to whom he had never ceased to communicate the plans of the Russian generals during the preceding war, which, however, did not prevent the Prussians being defeated, as we have seen.

When the Empress Elizabeth was dead, it is said that Panin advised Peter III. to repair to the Senate to be there proclaimed, in order to revive by that step the ancient usages of the nation, which, according to him, offered an additional guarantee to the authority of the sovereigns. He told him that it would be much more glorious to hold the crown and authority from the free

choice of the representatives of the Russian nation, than from the strength and venality of the soldiers, as his predecessors had done. But Panin only dictated this advice through the most profound perfidy, and his devotedness to the interests of Catherine. Thus, in one manner or the other, this unfortunate prince could not escape his destiny. He was on the point of following the advice of Panin; but through the irresolution natural to him, having consulted other courtiers, he was dissuaded from the scheme. The old prince Trubetzkoi stated to him that the recommendation of Panin was not only very dangerous, but also quite opposed to the customs of the empire; that the Russian constitution was purely military, and that the senate had rarely influenced the election of the Czars; that there was no glory in being crowned by a judicial body rather than by victorious soldiers; that he ought not to disquiet himself for a vain formality, nor place himself under the tutelage of an ambitious senate; that if the throne tottered, the senate would not be strong enough to prop it up; and that, above all things, he should avoid discontenting the soldiers.*

In the interior, the commencement of his administration gave the happiest hopes. In fact, Peter III. pardoned those who had offended him during the reign of Elizabeth, and recalled from exile all the victims of the vengeance of that *Very Merciful Princess*. He suppressed the horrible secret chancery, that state inquisition, whose name alone made the citizens tremble. He restored liberty to the nobles, always more humbled, more degraded since the reign of Ivan Vassilievitch. He enfranchised the slaves on the immense domains of the clergy, by re-annexing their lands to the crown.† He reformed numerous abuses which had crept into the judicial order, and even the jurisprudence followed by the

* Levesque does not even mention this curious fact, and it is from the biographer of Catherine that we borrow it; but it is attested by several others.

† This measure has also been attributed to Catherine; perhaps she only completed what he had begun.

Russian tribunals. Finally, he devoted himself, with the most useful intentions, to commerce, the sciences, and the arts. We have seen that he laboured to change the ideas of his people. Unfortunately all his exertions, which might have conciliated the favour of the nation, were baffled by his obstinacy in introducing German manners into his court and camp. He had already sacrificed to this foolish chimera all the calculations of a sound policy : he had restored to the king of Prussia his towns, his prisoners, and had even granted him indemnities for his defeats ; in a word, Frederick, beaten, had obtained from his enthusiastic disciple advantages such as he would not have dared to demand had he been victorious. Moreover, the tastes which degraded him retained their empire ; and if he could have obtained the love of his subjects, he certainly could not count on their respect or their fear.

Catherine, aided by her partisans, had skilfully profited by all these faults to establish, through an opposite conduct, her popularity. Shortly before the death of the empress—yielding to the necessity of obtaining a reconciliation to reinstate her character—she abandoned Poniatowski, and suddenly appeared at the theatre seated by the side of the sovereign, astonishing by her presence and her new favour a court which had stigmatised her by the most insulting forgetfulness. After the death of the empress, she constantly attended the churches, affected the national manners, and caused herself to be extolled by the clergy, who only saw in Peter III. a despoiler, and more—a Protestant. It was not long before Poniatowski had a successor in the affections of the grand-duchess ; a third intrigue engaged Catherine before the death of the Empress Elizabeth, and no one doubted it at the court. Gregory Orloff, this new lover, occupied a low rank in the guards ; but if he had not the advantage of illustrious birth, nature had endowed him with compensating gifts, in a masculine beauty and an intrepid character. Catherine had confided to him her most secret designs, and had made him the most determined of the conspirators. The accomplices of these scandalous adulteries

became the natural promoters of her usurpation ; for the distance is small, for a subject, between dishonouring the bed of a king, and raising the hand against his throne. Peter III., in fact, meditated the imprisonment of his wife, when he knew for the *third time* that she carried in her womb the fruit of her guilty amours. He had visited Prince Ivan in the fortress of Schlussembourg, and, as it was generally thought, with the intention of calling him to the succession of the throne. But it seems that this unfortunate youth, afflicted by imbecility or madness, the effect of long captivity, could not answer his views. Then, it is said, he cast his eyes on his uncle, Prince George of Holstein, whom he invited to his court, and loaded with honours : this choice was little calculated to flatter the wishes of the nation, because one foreigner thus introduced another. However this may be, Peter III., on the point of opening the campaign against Denmark, was not inclined to quit Moscow before he had incarcerated Catherine in a state-prison, and declared her son Paul Petrovitch illegitimate. According to Levesque, this was to give to the scandals of the court a credibility which they could not have in the eyes of justice. It seems, however, even by referring to himself, that there was a sufficiency of accumulated proof of the divers adulteries, or rather the permanent adultery of Catherine, to enable the tribunals who would have been called upon to pronounce sentence on this grave question, to have decided from other evidence than the scandals of the court. Catherine, adds this writer, was compelled to conspire to preserve her liberty, that of her son, and even his life. Writers less indulgent, or less loose in their morals, have expressed the same fact, by saying : “ It was necessary that Catherine should conspire, to escape the punishment she had so richly merited.”* The fate and the faults of her husband too well served this audacious woman. As we have

* Levesque justifies his views by saying that Peter had avowed his intention of marrying his mistress, Woronzow ; and in order to accomplish that object, it was necessary that the head of Catherine should fall.

seen, Peter III. had created enemies in all classes of the nation by his German preferences ; and even at this juncture the war against Denmark to recover the duchy of Sleswick, which had long belonged to his ancestors, but the possession of which had been guaranteed to Denmark by twenty solemn treaties, excited general discontent. While he was thus sinking in public opinion, Catherine, serenity on her brow and candour on her lips, carried on with infernal activity her sinister plots. She had caused Orloff to be appointed captain-quarter-master of artillery, and through him she easily disposed of the military chest of that corps ; but what proves that she had long prepared her resources is, that Orloff had been promoted to this post, at the instigation of Catherine, before the death of the Empress Elizabeth ; that is to say, when this attachment was yet a secret even to the friends of the grand-duchess.

Three factions laboured, not in concert, though simultaneously, in the success of the designs of Catherine. The first had been directed, under Elizabeth, by the ex-chancellor Bestucheff, and still continued, notwithstanding the exile of this old concoctor of intrigues ; the chief of the second was a young woman of eighteen or twenty years of age, the Princess Daschkoff, who conspired to play a part and acquire notoriety ; finally, the third was directed by Catherine herself. These three factions did not know each other, and were only concentrated at the last moment, at the moment when the grand blow was to be struck. From the recesses of her mysterious voluptuousness, Catherine held, with a sure and firm hand, the reins which curbed to the plans of her ambition these three parties, ignorant of each other, and that multitude of adventurers and scoundrels, titled or vulgar, so different in rank, in fortune, and in genius.

The Hetman Razomouffsky and the Count Panin entered into the conspiracy. The ambassadors of the courts of Vienna, Versailles, and Copenhagen, favoured it. These different ministers had employed all possible means, and finally had scattered vast

sums of money, to draw partisans to the revolution which was preparing ; “ for,” says a writer, “ if there be a Russian who can resist flattery, there is not one who can resist gold.”* The conspirators deliberated for a long time how to accomplish their project. They were particularly embarrassed in deciding how to dispose of the Emperor. Razomouffsky and Orloff wished to carry him off from the castle of Petersburg, at the close of one of the orgies which he never failed there to celebrate on the festival of St. Peter. Count Panin had himself gone to reconnoitre the apartment, that he might be carried off with the greater facility. The Lieutenant Passeck, one of the friends of Orloff, and the most ferocious of all the ruffians collected, demanded to stab the Emperor in the midst of his court ; and twice he had concealed himself in the garden to execute his ambushed purpose, in spite of the prohibition of Panin. The conspirators were still less agreed as to the manner of replacing the unfortunate monarch than as to the means of precipitating him from the throne ; but, as we shall soon be able to perceive, those who desired to invest Catherine with absolute authority were more numerous or more skilful than those who wished that she should content herself with the regency. Count Panin was the leader of these latter ; and he founded his opposition on the ground that Catherine was not of the blood of the czars.† Was it not a species of diabolical mockery, to persist in preserving the rights of legitimacy, that is to say, rights according to monarchical ideas, at the moment when all laws, human and divine, were about to be trampled under foot ?

The festivities had commenced at Peterhoff, at the moment

* Castera.

† Panin was amorous of the Princess Daschkoff, and up to this time an unrequited lover ; but she, as a good court conspirator, refused nothing to attach him wholly to Catherine. This devotedness is the rather to be remarked, as Count Panin had been the lover of the mother of Madame Daschkoff, and all the court believed the latter to be the fruit of that connection.—CASTERA.

when one of the conspirators, Passeck, was arrested, from what motive was not known. However, all the conspirators trembled. The Princess Daschkoff hurried to Count Panin, whose indolent-wickedness had not been roused by the imminence of the peril.*

It became, necessary, however, to take a decided step. But Catherine knew how to take it, as we shall see; and she justified the remarkable phrase she uttered in reference to herself: "No woman," said she a few days before, "is bolder than I am; my daring is boundless." An invincible fatality seemed to impel her unfortunate husband to his ruin. Warned, several times, of the conspiracy against him, he despised all such intelligence, even that which arrived from the king of Prussia; for at Berlin they knew what was plotting at St. Petersburg much better than Peter himself. He thus answered the agents of that monarch: "Listen to me: if you are my friends, allude no more to this matter, which to me is odious." The conspirators, on the news of the arrest of Passeck, unanimously resolved to act at once, under favour of the silence of night, not to allow the Czar time to anticipate them. Gregory Orloff, one of his brothers, and his friend Bibikoff, repaired to the barracks to prepare the soldiers of their party to act at the first signal; while another brother of Orloff, Alexis, hastened to Peterhoff to find the empress.

On the eve of triumph or of punishment, and bearing in her breast an incertitude so terrible, this young woman slept tranquilly. The pavilion she inhabited was situated at the extremity of the garden, on the borders of the Gulf of Finland. This spot

* The author of the *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe* said of him, "His organisation is weak, his imagination cold, his soul little elevated; he is subject to wrong-headedness; it is the result of the spleen and habitual nervous attacks; but his melancholy is not that of a conspirator. It is not that sombre fermentation, slow and profound, which engenders the blackest crimes or the most heroic deeds; it is the apathetic vacuum of a sad soul, which seeks yet fears solitude; of a lazy and uncultivated intellect, which applies to affairs to distract *ennui*, and quickly escapes from them to fall back again into indolence."

was called the Pavilion Monplaisir. There, the better to aid her flight, she had stationed, as without any design, a small boat, which also served for the nocturnal visits of her lovers. Gregory Orloff, giving to his brother a key to the pavilion, made known to him the secret avenues which would lead him with the most promptitude and mystery; and Madame Daschkoff gave him a note, on which she had hurriedly traced a few words. It was two o'clock, after midnight, when Alexis Orloff, approaching the bed of the empress, was obliged to put his hand upon her to awaken her from profound sleep; she started up suddenly, and saw by the side of her couch an unknown soldier. "Your majesty," said he, "has not an instant to lose; prepare to follow me." Then he immediately disappeared. Catherine, controlling her agitation, called Ivanouna; both dressed themselves hurriedly, and disguised themselves, so as not to be recognised by the sentinels who guarded the castle. Scarcely were they ready, when the soldier came to conduct them to the carriage, which awaited them at the end of the garden. Alexis Orloff seized the reins, and they started. The exhaustion of the horses, urged to a speed too rapid, compelled the empress to complete the journey on foot. Fatigued and disquieted, but always mistress of herself, and affecting an air full of calm and confidence—although a slight paleness on her cheeks betrayed her profound emotion—she reached Petersburg at seven o'clock in the morning.

She repaired immediately to the quarters of the guards of Ismailoff, three companies of whom had been gained over. On the report of her arrival, rushing half-naked from their barrack, the soldiers crowded round her with loud shouts. In a faltering voice she said, "that the most pressing danger forced her to demand their protection; that the Czar, that very night, had intended to put her to death, as well as her son; that she could only escape death by flight; and that she reposed sufficient confidence in them to place herself in their hands." The troops, furious with indignation, answered tumultuously, swearing to die for her.

The Hetman Razoumoffski arrived at this moment ; and his voice, and the example of their comrades, soon carried away all the others. In the midst of this multitude, all intoxicated with joy at a revolution, the almoner of the regiment of Ismailoff was sent for ; and that priest, a crucifix in his hand, received the oaths of the military. Thus sanctified by religion, nothing more was wanting to the revolt but success to render it a lawful victory. It succeeded but too well ; the contagion was rapid and complete among the troops. The regiment of artillery alone resisted, and, in spite of the presence and entreaties of Orloff, awaited the orders of the general who commanded it : he was a Frenchman, named Villebois, who only yielded after so many others.

Catherine, already surrounded by a great number of men of the guards, and a large proportion of the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, who followed the movement without considering their reasons or their wishes, proceeded immediately to the church of Casan, where every thing was prepared for the solemn consecration of this astounding usurpation. The Archbishop of Novgorod, clothed in his sacerdotal robes, and surrounded by priests venerable by their age, awaited her at the altar. He placed the imperial crown on her head, proclaimed her, with a loud voice, Empress of all the Russias, under the name of Catherine II. ; and at the same time declared the young Grand Duke Paul Petrovitch her successor. The nobles who were at St. Petersburg learned, when they awoke, the conspiracy and its complete success. They hastened to render homage and swear fidelity to the sovereign. That princess, after having traversed the ranks of the soldiers on horseback, clothed in the uniform of the guards, repaired to the palace which the Empress Elizabeth had occupied. She dined there before an open window, at each moment saluting the people. That people, overpowered at such an excess of goodness, fell every instant on their knees ; and proclaiming, in the intoxication of their joy, the name of their virtuous sovereign, repeated with enthusiasm the oath of eternal fidelity. It was what,

in the style of a royal historiographer, or salaried publisher of a gazette, would be called a *touching family picture*. But veracious history has other language, in its profound indignation, to paint these insolent court parades, where successful crime tramples over public stupidity and baseness.

Whilst thus in less than two hours he lost the crown and empire of the czars, what did the unfortunate Peter III.? He departed gaily in his carriage from Oranienbaum to Peterhoff, followed by giddy youths, among charming women, who, still bewildered by the pleasures of the preceding day, joyously anticipated those of the morrow. A single man, one servant alone, had thought of Peter when all the world abandoned him; and sent him salutary advice, had it not arrived too late. Astounded, overwhelmed with what he read, Peter III. did not seek resources in the zeal of some friends still attached to his cause. He adopted none of the energetic counsels which they tendered. More weak than the flock of feeble women who surrounded him, he persuaded himself that the audacious Catherine would consent only to use half her power; and allowed the Count of Woronzow, brother of his mistress, to depart, who had eagerly offered himself to negotiate an accommodation; but who, in reality, was only anxious to place himself in safety, by tendering his submission to the empress; in fact, he remained with her. Munich advised the unfortunate monarch to place himself at the head of 3000 soldiers of Holstein, then at Oranienbaum, and march to St. Petersburg. This vigorous proposal frightened the women and courtiers; and one of them suggested the more prudent advice of going to Cronstadt, where they would find a powerful navy, and a city defended by the sea. A general officer preceded to announce the prince; but when the prince himself arrived with his suite, his envoy was already a prisoner; and when, answering to the summons of the sentinel, "Who goes there?" Peter advancing, exclaimed, "I, the emperor;" the soldier answered, "There is no emperor." And, in fact, to confirm this sinister

reply, the garrison, completely armed, lined the shore; silence was only interrupted by the cry of "Live Catherine!" and by the menace of Admiral Talysin to fire into the yacht if she did not sheer off. At these words, the affrighted prince shrank back; but his aide-de-camp, Goudovitch, stopped him, saying, "Prince, put your arm within mine, and leap on shore; no one will dare to fire on us; and Cronstadt will still belong to your majesty." Munich warmly supported this generous advice; the deplorable Peter, incapable of listening to them, rushed into the cabin of the yacht, in the midst of the fainting women. Time was not even allowed to weigh the anchor; the cable was cut, and the vessel gained the distance by sweeps. Peter III. might still have passed immediately into Sweden, placed himself at the head of the army which was in Pomerania, returned fighting to his dominions, and seated himself a victor on his usurped throne. A prince of courage would have found a thousand means to save his crown and avenge his dishonour. But the feeble Peter only listened to the accursed suggestions of fear; and, always flattering himself with an impossible accommodation with his cruel wife, he returned to Oranienbaum.

During all these cowardly hesitations of her husband, she followed up her shameless success. Crowned in the morning in the church of Casan, in the evening she mounted her horse for the second time; and, a naked sword in her hand, a crown of oak or laurel on her brow, she placed herself at the head of the troops, charmed with her beauty and her boldness. Her triumph was no longer doubtful; those whom the incertitude of events had hitherto restrained, precipitated themselves in crowds at her feet. A manifesto, which had been some days in readiness, was extensively circulated. In it Catherine justified her usurpation in the name of the interests of Russia, imputing to her husband reforms which put in peril the orthodox religion, and even the scheme of introducing Protestantism; she therein recited the last treaty with Prussia, by which, in fact, the dignity of the Russian cabinet had been singu-

larly compromised. It is also said that in this manifesto she spoke of the *bad morals* of her husband. It was Messalina insulting Claudius. The Holstein troops, quartered at Oranienbaum when Peter returned, surrounded him, and beseeched him, with tears in their eyes, to lead them against the rebels. Munich again entreated him to confide his fortune and his person to the devotedness of those brave men; but the miserable prince, who could not appreciate the power of courage or the resources of a high resolution,—who could not comprehend how, alone with Munich, he might still brave all the military forces of the empire,—shamefully submitted. He wrote to his wife confessing his faults, and offered her a share in the power which she already possessed entire. She disdained an answer, deeming it not worth while to snatch one moment from the accomplishment of her plans. Then Peter despatched the chamberlain Ismailoff to Petersburg, to offer the empress cession of the empire, only demanding to retire into Holstein with his mistress and his friend Goudovitch. As the answer to this new act of baseness, he was ordered to repair to his wife; and he obeyed.

This sovereign, so rapidly overthrown, re-entered his capital, there to drain to the dregs the cup of the bitterest humiliations. In traversing the ranks of the soldiers who had dethroned him, he heard them impudently shout, “Live Catherine!” His mistress, his friends were outrageously seized and insulted by his side; and himself—who could credit it?—himself, the Czar, stripped of his orders, of his clothes, his feet bare, and with only a shirt on his back, remained some time on the grand staircase of the palace, exposed to the cruel derision of an unrestrained soldiery. He was then confined under a sure guard. Soon Count Panin went to him to present an act of abdication, which he signed. Never, in the world, did a sovereign, fallen from a throne, sign one conceived in terms so dishonouring and so base. Never did the rage of the people, breaking power asunder, proceed to such odious extremities against the person of princes. Men must have grovelled in the dirt before kings, to humble them so low. Peter there recognised

his incapacity to govern, confessed his faults, and promised never again to ascend the throne. When this infamous act was completed, the prince was conducted to the castle of Robscha. On the following day Catherine received the homage of the courtiers and of the women of the court, who, the day before, had formed the mad and irresolute suite of her unfortunate husband. Among them conspicuous was Munich, whose countenance, says Levesque, blushed with no shame, because, always great, he had never for an instant swerved from his duty. In fact, as there is a limit to all things, fidelity has its limits when a prince abandons himself, and, whether through resignation or cowardice, deserts his own defence.

How cruel and terrible was the punishment of so much pusillanimity! At the end of a few days, the inconstancy natural to popular affections manifested itself by stifled murmurs and reproaches, which the sailors and people addressed to the soldiers on account of their treason. It was also known that at Moscow the garrison and people had declared against the events of St. Petersburg. Then it was perceived that the usurpation could not be consolidated, and its murmurs be hushed, without a bloody sacrifice. Alexis, brother of Gregory Orloff, repaired to the prison of Peter, accompanied by an assassin. They offered to drink with the prince, and the offer was accepted. They had with them a violent poison, which they dexterously poured into the glass instead of brandy. However, the prince, detecting the crime in the eyes of the murderers, or in the flavour of the beverage, refused to continue drinking, and demanded milk with loud cries. Then the two scoundrels called to their aid Boriatinski, who commanded the post; and the unfortunate monarch was strangled.*

Several historians have agitated the question, whether Cathe-

* "Persons whom I have known, saw, some years afterwards, in the apartment where he expired, a curtain which he had torn in his struggle. Boriatinski, one of the executioners in this assassination, travelled in France, and afterwards became Grand-Marshal of the Court of Russia."—LEVESQUE.

rine had a knowledge of the project of the assassins, and had given her consent to this atrocity. On this Levesque dissertates with the embarrassment and clumsiness ordinary in such a case, and finishes by admitting the doubt. "Neither Catherine," says he, "nor Gregory Orloff possessed the firmness of purpose which alone makes great criminals;" but that writer is contradicted by what precedes, and still more by what follows, where perhaps is still more strongly manifested all the virile energy which nature had given to the Semiramis of the north for the perpetration of crimes. When Gregory Orloff knew that the murder was consummated, he galloped to Petersburg, and presented himself suddenly before Catherine, pale, aghast, and trembling. Catherine received him with tranquillity, seriously reproved him for the puerility of his emotions, and at once shut herself up with him, Panin, Razoumoffsky, and some others. In this sinister council it was resolved not to make known the death of Peter till the morrow. However, Catherine re-appeared serene amid the crowd of courtiers, dined in public, and held her court with remarkable gaiety; and flatterers said that never had a charming sovereign more brightly shone, environed by the triple splendour of grace, youth, and goodness! On the following day she announced the death of the ex-emperor while she was at table, bursting into tears; dismissed the courtiers, the foreign ministers; shut herself up in her apartment; and exhibited during several days, says her biographer, all the marks of the most profound sorrow. She soon announced to her people, through an ukase, that the will of the All-Powerful had removed Peter from this life. This document, observes Castera, is a masterpiece of cruelty and hypocrisy. No one was the dupe of this audacious falsehood. The marks of poison were frightfully evident on the body of this unfortunate prince, which was exposed in public to crush any pretext for revolt. He was declared to have died of hemorrhoidal colic. The people unreservedly displayed their grief and indignation on following the obsequies of the ill-fated Peter III., and no longer regarded Catherine and her

accomplices but with horror. Conspiracies were apprehended, and the example of Moscow proved that revolts might be dreaded. The fears of power thus acquired necessarily led to terrible results. Then commenced a course of inquisitorial procedures and tenebrous horrors. A terrorism, so much the greater as the blows of tyranny were more secret, intimidated all minds. Nevertheless, it would have been a fine opportunity for a generous nation to have risen in a mass, and stifled in the blood of all these decorated assassins a beginning so fatal and so odious.

REIGN OF CATHERINE II.

1762. When, through the assassination of Peter III., the revolution was consummated, the gratitude of the sovereign was displayed towards the accomplices of her usurpation. The two Orloffs, Gregory and Alexis, were created counts; the former, who at length reached the dignity of Master of the Holy Empire, filled the post of grand master of the artillery. Panin had the ministry of foreign affairs; and the others were variously recompensed. There was not one, even down to the medical man, the mercenary fabricator of the poison which the dethroned prince had swallowed, who did not participate in the favours of the august sovereign; for having poisoned the father, he was appointed first physician to the son, that is to say, to the young grand-duke. However, the distribution of these favours and these rewards, vast though it was, created among many jealousy and discontent. All who had rushed forward to worship the new power thought themselves entitled to claim the price of their treason. Even among those who had actively served the ambition of Catherine, many were not slow in repenting, and others showed themselves too exacting. The majority saw themselves the dupes of her dissimulation; and shuddered at having only laboured for a woman and her favourites, to reap nothing but the shame of crime, instead of sharing its fruit. The clergy, equally deceived in their hopes, only breathed vengeance, and recalled the name and the rights of

Prince Ivan. The leaven of so many passions, of so many combined hatreds, fermented in all parts of the empire. In vain had Catherine wished to show herself at Moscow in all the pomp of her authority. Less dazzled by her presents and her munificence than horrified by the idea of her crime, that population received her and her court in a silence full of indignation. Finally, the guards themselves, who had proclaimed her, manifested disquieting remorse; and many of them soon disappeared. Amid these agitations of discontent and party-spirit, which left the issue of this culpable enterprise still doubtful, Catherine thought of establishing her political preponderance. The court of Austria and that of France had imagined that the death of Peter III. would have brought about a change in the system of the cabinet of St. Petersburg: they were both deceived. The tact of the king of Prussia prevailed; and perhaps Catherine avenged against Maria Theresa a rivalry of genius which wounded her, and against Louis XV. a contempt by which she was deeply humiliated.

Her first act proved no less her strength than her contempt for the laws of justice. Biren, whom she had recalled from exile, was replaced in the heart of the country he had desolated, to the prejudice of Prince Charles Maurice of Saxony, elected by the people of Courland after his disgrace. Denmark, also yielding to the fear of her arms, abandoned to her the administration of Holstein. Long since weakened and torn asunder by the perpetual dissensions of a turbulent aristocracy, Poland saw new germs of discord formed in her bosom by the obstinacy of the Catholic majority to proscribe the *Dissenters*. Thus were named the Poles who followed the Greek Church, the Lutherans, and even those who, more audacious, professed the heresy received by Socinius; that is to say, those who denied the divinity of Christ. Catherine took the Dissenters under her protection, to kindle flames in Poland, and too well succeeded. The approaching death of Augustus III. singularly favoured a new revolution. All private ambitions were agitated; and the court of St. Petersburg, which foresaw

that the destiny of the republic was about to be decided, became the centre of intrigues. Catherine had already settled her plan. She began by obtaining, under specious pretexts, an engagement from the courts of Austria and France to observe a rigorous neutrality in reference to the affairs of Poland. A treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, which Frederick desired, was the compensation she attached to the same promise on the part of that prince. All the paths were thus prepared; excited cupidity and fear did the rest. The swords of the Russian officers flashed insultingly in the sanctuary of the debates of the Diet (1764), suspended the free expression of the general will; and, in spite of the opposition of some courageous patriots, Poniatowski was elected king of the Poles. Once on the throne, he pretended to be king in fact, and not to betray entirely the wishes of a generous nation. He founded some useful establishments, and seemed desirous of reforming a detestable administration, the bitter fruit of long misfortune; but Catherine made him feel that he was still no more than a favourite,—that is to say, a slave on a throne: she opposed and paralysed all his efforts.

The journey which Catherine then took in Livonia is falsely attributed to her desire of again seeing him (1765): she had more powerful motives. Whatever confidence she had in her good fortune, she deemed it prudent to sacrifice other victims to her safety; moreover, one crime begets another; and the path she trod was one in which it was most difficult to halt. Her soul, perhaps assailed by remorse, came forth triumphant from this frightful struggle; and henceforward capable of any thing, there was no act which she could not contemplate and accomplish. To ensure herself for the future, she wished to destroy all that might serve as a pretext for the regrets of the people, and their inconstancy. At this moment her guards conspired for the second time; but on quitting her capital, fearing to leave behind the formidable impressions of terror and pity, she caused these new conspirators to be secretly judged. Given up to the horrors of famine, their

prison was their tomb. Nevertheless, this last attempt of her enemies strengthened Catherine in the resolution which had determined her journey; it was the death of Prince Ivan. Then confined at Schlussembourg, this prince was in his twenty-fourth year. A noble and interesting countenance, a lofty stature, an inexpressible softness in his voice and manners,—all that nature could add to misfortune to excite commiseration, affected the most insensible hearts at the sight of Ivan. It is said that the weakness of his intellect was akin to imbecility; which is not astonishing, since this unhappy prince had been seized by the hand of misfortune in the swaddling-clothes of his cradle, and had never known any other world than his prison, any other of the human species than his gaolers. But the charge is not proved: moreover, if this is a reason devised to extenuate the horror of the crime which took away his life, that reason is detestable. A brigand named Mirovitch came out of the ranks of the Russian soldiers to serve the purpose of Catherine. He was promised all he desired. He was to attempt a feigned rescue of the prince; and the officers who guarded him, warned by an order signed by the empress, were to kill him on the instant the attempt was made. The crime was thus executed. The two guards, Vlaffief and Ouchakof, seeing that Mirovitch was about to break open the gates of the prison, threw themselves sword in hand on the unfortunate Ivan; almost naked, he nevertheless defended himself with incredible vigour; but at length he fell under the blows of these wretches; then they opened the gate, and showing to Mirovitch and his soldiers the bleeding body of the prince, they exclaimed, “Behold your emperor!” The assassins fled to Denmark, where they found a sure asylum with the Russian ambassador. Mirovitch, arrested, appeared before his judges with a composure which attested his senseless credulity; and was only undeceived when the axe, striking off his head, gave him that measure of gratitude which the instruments of great crimes ought to expect from those they have obeyed. The punishment he underwent did not avert sus-

picion from the real author of this odious plot. Henceforward any thing and every thing was expected; and the attention as well as the interest of the nation directed to the young Paul Petrovitch, presaged for him an equally mournful fate. This new tragedy, and the general consternation which was the result, though redoubling the public hatred, nevertheless prevented its explosion. But the fire smouldered beneath the ashes; and, compelled to give way to and humour her supporters, Catherine became almost the slave of the men necessary to her. Orloff abused his power against the nobles, and his empire over the heart of his sovereign. By neglecting her, he prepared his disgrace. The pride of this woman, and the impetuous exigence of her sensuality, admitted no lukewarmness nor division in the worship of her favourites. Orloff soon had a successor.

1767. It was at the same epoch that, aspiring to every kind of celebrity, Catherine composed her instructions to serve as the basis of a new system of legislation. All the nations of this vast empire were invited to concur, through their deputies, in the completion of this great work: the inhabitants of the banks of the Irtysh, those of the polar ice, appeared; and Moscow united within its walls these men, astonished to find themselves in company. The instructions of the empress, solemnly read in this immense assembly, obtained for her the magnificent titles of the great, the prudent, the mother of her country. However, alarmed at having given the representatives of the people an authority which might prove fatal to her power, she hastened to separate them. Gold medals were, however, struck, to immortalise the memory of their idle meeting; and the greatest number of them passed from the hands of the savage deputies who had received them to those of the jewellers of Moscow.

All her efforts for the good of her people, for perfecting the laws, the arts, and morals,—and the chivalric festivals, whose borrowed brilliancy sometimes environed the throne and shone in the capital,—did not prevent a great number of persons being dis-

contented throughout the empire ; and from out of this multitude, indignant at seeing the butchers of Peter III. share his power, an avenger might arise : a new example proved it. A young officer, named Tchoglokoff, animated by a generous fanaticism, concealed himself during several days in an obscure corner, which led to the retired apartments of the empress ; but having had the imprudence to confide his secret, he failed in his attempt, and disappeared. Catherine sometimes feigned to pardon, to essay a new method ; but it was one of her maxims, that the dead never return.

She had not ceased to oppress Poland and persecute the Polish nobles. The king of Prussia, no less eager for aggrandisement, whether by robbery or conquest, perfectly agreed with her in the scheme of invading and partitioning that unfortunate country. The courts of London and Stockholm had opened their eyes somewhat too late ; moreover, Catherine flattered one with a treaty of commerce, and the other by the cession of Holstein. However, the confederates, encouraged by Austria, and particularly by France, had seized on Cracow, a part of Podolia (1768) ; and had assembled together in the fortress of Bar, which gave its name to this patriotic assembly, celebrated for its misfortunes.

The war provoked by the French ministers, Choiseul and Vergennes, had commenced on the frontiers of Turkey. At first the Ottomans had the advantage, under the ramparts of Khoczin. Prince Gallitzin experienced two successive defeats. The unskilfulness of the Turkish generals soon rendered the obstinate valour of their soldiers useless. The Russians assumed a superiority which belongs rather to art and discipline than to bravery ; and Catherine, impatient of terminating a war, the issue of which was to give to Europe the measure of her strength, and fix her rank among its powers, wished, (1769) by attacking in the Grecian seas the Ottomans already vanquished by Roumianstoff and Repnin on the banks of the Borysthenes and the Danube, and

by Ighelstrom in the Black Sea, to crush them at a blow, and prepare for herself a splendid triumph. It seems even that, regarding nothing as impossible, she henceforward flattered herself with realising a grand project, of which she had derived the first idea from conversing with the indefatigable and enterprising Munich ; that of absolutely expelling the Turks from Europe, and restoring to the country of Themistocles and Philopœmon its ancient liberty. Had this project been sincere, it would have been the fruit of the imagination and the inconsequence of a woman, to see the most despotic of sovereigns undertake the restoration of that country and of so great a people ! But fortune did not favour her generals ; a revolution so glorious required hands more masculine and more pure. The intervention of Catherine was only hurtful to the Greeks, and only covered the Morea with bones and limbs. Equivocating emissaries, subaltern intriguers, had represented the country as ready to rise in a mass ; but their practices and their connections were neither sufficiently extended nor sufficiently masked. The Russians counted on the Greeks, and the Greeks on the Russians, so that the latter only disembarked insufficient forces, and discouragement succeeded enthusiasm ; the Mainotes, who considered themselves betrayed, took very little part in the insurrection, and from the height of their mountains remained tranquil spectators of the devastation of the Peloponnesus and of the massacre of their compatriots, after the precipitate retreat of the Russians. They were more fortunate in the bay of Tchesmé, thanks to the skill of English officers who commanded their vessels. (1770.) The name of Alexis Orloff is usually attached to this victory, but Catherine made only useless efforts to attribute the honour to him ; and sincere to herself, it was for the ravishment of the unfortunate Princess Tarrakonoff, daughter of Elizabeth,* and not for the

* The Empress Elizabeth had had three children by her clandestine marriage with the grand-huntsman, Alexis Razoumoffski : the youngest was a daughter, brought up under the name of Princess Tarrakonoff. Prince Radzivill had thought of espousing her to avenge his country, by exciting

burning of the Ottoman fleet, that she rewarded Orloff on his return to Moscow. The idea of firing the Turkish vessels belongs to the two English officers, Elphinstone and Dugdale: in order to execute it, the latter exposed himself to be burnt by the flames of his own fire-ships. (1770.) But however brilliant were the advantages of the campaign of 1770, they were not the term of the struggle in which Catherine was engaged. Her generals had other assaults to sustain.

1771. At the commencement of 1771, the formidable lines of Perecop were but a vain obstacle to the hardihood of Prince Dolgorucki, whom the capture of that place rendered master of all the Crimea. But a terrible scourge punished the Russians for their success: the plague, brought from Bender to Moscow, ravaged several provinces of the empire; and the superstitious ignorance of the inhabitants of those countries from day to day increased the intensity of the evil. Gregory Orloff offered to brave this double peril, and subject to useful regulations this blind and unfortunate people. He succeeded in arresting the

a revolution against Catherine. But after the last misfortunes of Poland, and the dispersion of the confederates of Bar, that prince, forced to renounce his lofty hopes, consented, in order to recover his property, which the empress had confiscated, no longer to hold any intimacy with the young Tarrakonoff, whom he had left in Italy. Nevertheless he repudiated with horror the proposal of conducting her back into Russia, to give her up. Alexis Orloff was, accordingly, charged with this infamous commission. He departed for Leghorn, and despatched his emissaries to Rome, to entice to that sea-port the unfortunate young princess, the more helpless as she had been assailed by want since the departure of Radzivill. She abandoned herself, with all the candour and inexperience of youth, to the brilliant hopes which Alexis Orloff held out; and the deception was easy, for the scoundrel affected for her the tenderest passion. Received at Leghorn as a future sovereign, she saw herself for a moment surrounded by all the illusions of grandeur; but as soon as she placed her foot on the vessel of Orloff, she was loaded with irons and confined at the bottom of the hold. On arriving in Russia, she was thrown into a fortress, and treated in the most barbarous manner. Six years afterwards she perished in her prison, through the inundation of the Neva.

progress of the contagion. It was, without doubt, the most glorious moment of his life. The plague, extending its ravages into Poland, served as a pretext to Catherine and the powers in concert with her, who meditated the partition, to occupy it with fresh troops, ostensibly intended to form a sanitary line for the protection of the public health. The Poles vainly sought to escape their last misfortune ; doomed to a sanguinary proscription, the confederates of Bar were dispersed.* Despair originated in the mind of their intrepid chief, Pulaski, a design too easy to justify, if we consider all the injustice and infamy of the monarchical brigandage which crushed their national existence : it was the carrying off of the king. This event served as a new pretext for the enemies of Poland to accomplish their designs. All the efforts of its defenders turned to the advantage of tyranny ; so often is there fatality in worldly affairs !

More humbled than dispirited by their defeats, the Turks made new and powerful preparations ; more skilful leaders commanded them. Exhausted by their very victories, and in the seas of Greece by the fatal influence of a devouring climate, the Russians had recourse to peace. An armistice was agreed upon, and the respective ambassadors of the two powers and of their allies were to assemble at Foksani. (1771.) Gregory Orloff was ambitious of the glory of giving peace to his country ; he aspired to share the throne on which he had so powerfully contributed to seat Catherine, and this hope he had long nourished. The empress, whom he fatigued, over whom he even tyrannised, saw him depart with secret pleasure. Panin and the whole court did not conceal the delight they felt at the disgrace of the tyrant. However, hardly had Orloff (1772) heard that Vassiltschikoff, presented by Panin, had succeeded to his privileges with the

* To give an idea of the means which the empress employed to extirpate this national opposition, it must be stated that, during the preceding year, nine Polish nobles had appeared at Warsaw with their wrists amputated. The Russian General Drewitz was at once their judge and their executioner.—CASTERA.

empress, than he hurried back to Petersburg. He was prohibited from entering the capital. Soon compelled to resign his employments, but compensated for their loss by money, he paraded through Europe his gross manners, his insolent pride, his ennui, and his regrets.

1773. At length Catherine commenced the dismemberment of Poland. We have already said, that for a long time she had been agreed with the king of Prussia. The court of Vienna yielded to the influence of the court of Berlin; and as to France, she was represented in her foreign relations by the Duke d'Aiguillon, from whom there was nothing to fear either from the elevation of his mind or the superiority of his genius; the Ottomans were no longer to be dreaded: thus the Semiramis of the North saw her ambition surrounded with impunity. The Poles, invaded by the allied armies, burst forth in indignation, and loudly demanded the intervention of the powers which had guaranteed the treaty of Oliva, by which the integrity of their territory had been ensured, and which was for a long time regarded as the Peace of Westphalia of the North of Europe. However, not content with having invaded with strong hand, the three powers further desired that a diet should recognise them as legitimate masters of the provinces they had ravished, in contempt of the sacred rights of nations. A diet assembled, and, in spite of the resistance of a majority of the members, terrorism soon completed what corruption had commenced; not to see their capital pillaged, these disheartened and disconcerted nobles surrendered the state. This scandalous treaty, in which kings parcelled out men, their fellows, as robbers divide flocks of sheep, caused a loss to Poland of 5,000,000 of inhabitants. The territory which devolved to Russia, and which was the most extensive, contained 1,800,000; that of Austria, 2,000,000; and that of Prussia, 860,000 souls. As a compensation, the three august sovereigns laboured to *reform* (?) the government of Poland: it may readily be supposed that they only sought to aggravate

its vices, so as to render it impossible for her ever to resume what had been plundered. In fact, this first treaty of partition prepared the event of 1795, that is to say, the total annihilation of the Polish nation.

The negotiations at Foksani had no result; they had been renewed at Bucharest without more success, and war had been removed to the banks of the Danube at the close of 1773. Repulsed under the walls of Silistria, but reinforced by the arrival of fresh troops, the Russians recrossed the river, and resumed the advantage which an excellent discipline necessarily gave over the irregular bands commanded by the pachas. The operations in Poland had not slackened the war with the Turks. Roumiantsoff accumulated brilliant successes; his victories secured the peace of Kainardgi, which opened to Russia the Black Sea and all the other ports of the Turkish empire, preserved to her Azof, Taganrog, and assured the independence of the Crimea, or rather reserved it for the ambition of Catherine. The Turks—and it is, perhaps, a proof of their good faith—are the least clever of men in diplomacy; they have always been the dupes in their transactions with the other people of Europe. These military prosperities, on which Catherine prided herself, were cruelly balanced: the plague continued its ravages in the south of her dominions; and while she acquired 1,800,000 doubtful subjects in Poland, the inhumanity of her governors made her lose 600,000 in her empire. (1774.) The entire horde of the Tongouses, or Eleuths, still more indignant at the outrages offered to their venerable chief than at the rapine which plundered them, abandoned an inhospitable soil and unjust masters, to resume, at the foot of the mountains of Thibet, the pasturage of their fathers.

Eager to obtain the suffrages of the celebrated men of her age, Catherine affected, in her correspondence, virtues, but especially a political moderation, to which she was a stranger. Voltaire and Diderot were more than once invited by her to repair to her court.

Voltaire, already enabled to appreciate, by his journey to Berlin, the value of august friendships, did not suffer himself to be ensnared, and continued his cajoleries at a great distance. Diderot went to St. Petersburg, and was there received with the most flattering distinction ; but the Semiramis of the North found out that in politics he was a mere child.

Free from all restraint by the departure of Orloff,* and little affected by public misfortunes, she drew all pleasures around her ; festivals succeeded each other rapidly at the court. Orloff was not slow to re-appear ; she banished him a second time from St. Petersburg, nevertheless consoling this favourite for the humiliation of his pride by gratifying his cupidity. Highly estimating his courage, and counting on his devotedness, Catherine always regarded him as one of the firmest pillars of her throne. Thus Orloff soon recovered his former favour, and resumed the employments he had been compelled to abandon. (1774.) We now arrive at the period when the name of Peter III. renewed in the Russian empire tragic scenes to which, in times more barbarous, that of Demetrius had given rise. All evils at once, war, pestilence, and taxes, oppressed the nation. The discontented, the priests in particular, envenomed by their sermons these cruel wounds. Many ambitious subalterns thought the moment favourable for a revolution, and successively assumed the name of Peter III. ; no one had sufficient genius to sustain this part durably. It was reserved to Yemelian Pugatschef, a Cossack, born on the banks of the Don, to inspire Catherine with serious fears. The

* Gregory Orloff travelled over the different states of Europe, and displayed the greatest pomp in his journeys. He appeared at Paris in a coat, the buttons of which were large diamonds, and with a sword also studded with diamonds ; at Spa he eclipsed the Duke of Chartres (afterwards the Duke of Orleans), and all the other princes who were there. He alarmed by his play the boldest gamblers. Finally, he showed himself at Versailles, at a ball given on the occasion of the marriage of Madame Clotilda, dressed in a simple frock of coarse cloth ; intending, no doubt, to insult the court of France.—CASTERA.

rapidity of his first successes was alarming. Directed by monks, he flattered their ambition, and superstition fought for him. After his earliest victories, he caused a medal to be struck, with the inscription, "Peter III., Emperor of all the Russias;" and on the reverse, "Redivivus et Ultor." Moreover, the moderation he affected at the commencement of his career was calculated to draw to him populations which groaned under the vexations of the Russian lieutenants. Prince Galitzin avenged the defeat of General Bibikoff, and other generals completed the destruction of the troops of the rebel; and himself, betrayed and given up by his followers, expiated at Moscow, on the scaffold, his boldness, and the numberless evils that he had added to those which already desolated the empire.

At this epoch appeared a new favourite, more dangerous to Orloff than the modest Vassiltchikoff, who had just been dismissed; it was Potemkin. Of all those who enjoyed the favour of Catherine, none took so large a part in the events of her reign, or so intimately associated his name with that of his sovereign. They almost shared the exercise of supreme power; and perhaps it would be equitable to distribute between them, in an equal degree, the praise or blame which the government of Catherine merited from this period. Potemkin, like Orloff, aspired, and no less vainly, to marry the empress. This princess was of too despotic a character not to fear a master. Shortly afterwards Catherine abolished some taxes, and especially those levied on account of the war. Such benefits rarely honoured her administration. Then, also, she honoured the return and the services of the conquerors of the Ottomans, at the head of whom appeared Roumiantsoff, by gifts and festivals, the munificence of which satisfied the pride and the cupidity of the most exacting. Catherine knew how to reward greatness, but rarely with discretion; her finances had too much suffered by her prodigalities, and still more by the unblushing depredations of her favourites. If the spoils of Poland had not been appropriated to satiate the avarice

of several among them, the last years of the reign of Catherine would have witnessed the ruin of Russia. Whilst she laboured to compose and promulgate a regulation,—basis of a new system of internal administration,—and attempted successful essays for the general commerce of her empire, and caused the plans of noble monuments to be traced for the embellishment and utility of her principal cities, the insurrection of the Tatars of the Crimea awakened her ambition, and led her to objects more important in her eyes (1776), and which suspended the execution of part of her useful projects. The ancient khan of the Crimea was sold to the Turks; the Russians had replaced him by Sahim Guerey, who, at a later date, paid dearly for his devotedness. From that time the Turks knew that she would no longer respect the clauses which guaranteed the independence of that country; but Catherine had the tact to postpone the rupture to a period sufficiently distant to allow time for the success of her designs. At this epoch, that is to say, in the course of the year 1776, she visited Moscow. It was on her return that she chose Zavadoffsky as the successor to Potemkin, who was himself soon replaced by Zoritz.

Since she had been on the throne, Catherine found it too irksome to cover her pleasures with that salutary veil which a respect for decency seeks to imitate, when natural modesty has not weaved the tissue; but she had majestically, if we may use the expression, subjected disorderly conduct to forms, the regularity of which was consecrated by the court, as an exception in favour of the sovereign, as a prerogative inherent in the crown. There was a ceremony for installing a favourite, and for dismissing him when he ceased to please. Life, the habitudes of the palace, were all determined by this scandalous legislation of the boudoir. Never did crowned vice advertise itself with a haughtier and a more unblushing impudence. Never were all the notions on which public decency rests more openly despised and trampled under foot. Every young man of masculine beauty became the hope of

his family; and every day a hundred rivals were seen aspiring to the facile favours of their sovereign, exhibiting as she passed them their athletic organisation, and the bold front of a wrestler who hurls defiance and demands the combat. On reading such details, we often think of the imperishable characters in which a Tacitus would have devoted to infamy these solemn saturnalia of a reign of infamy and blood, so vaunted by philosophers. When the favoured lover ceased to please, he was bound at once to depart; and, content with the liberalities which accompanied his dismissal, surrender without a murmur his functions to the new favourite. The latter, on the day after his presentation, appeared in public, his sovereign on his arm, and bedizened with decorations, which suddenly, and in a single night, through despotic omnipotence, had fallen on his obscurity. Potemkin was the first who dared to infringe the usage, by remaining at the court, in spite of the order of the empress, when Zavadoffsky had attracted her notice. Potemkin thought, when losing the rights of a lover, that he still retained other titles to the attachment and favour of his sovereign. He did not deceive himself, and his ascendancy preserved for him what the others lost—their honours, dignities, and credit—on giving up their appointment. Always disquieted for the morrow, and always fearful of seeing her enemies arise,—the more formidable as they could base their projects on the rights of the grand-duke, to whom the throne belonged,—Catherine would not abandon the support of such men as Orloff and Potemkin. Potemkin, who knew the inconstant passion of Catherine, took advantage of it to destroy those favourites who aspired to raise their credit above his own. Orloff, returned to the court, seemed easily to bear this victorious rivalry; Zavadoffski, more hasty and imprudent, wished (1776) to enter the lists of intrigue with this disproportionate adversary; he succumbed. Potemkin replaced him by a young Servian, named Zoritz, a simple officer of hussars, and who, having come to St. Petersburg to seek promotion, was indebted to the beauty of his features and the elegance

of his form for a fortune which the noblest exploits would not have achieved.

The death of the first wife of the Grand Duke, Wilhelmina of Hesse Darmstadt, which took place at this epoch, was added as a new crime to the murders of Peter the Third and of Ivan. The empress dreaded, it is said, the possible consequences of the connection of that princess with men of ambitious character, and particularly Andrew Razoumoffsky, who passed for her lover. Shortly afterwards the grand-duke went to Berlin, where his second marriage was treated of with the Princess of Wurtemberg, niece to Catherine. The troubles in the Crimea became more stormy. Two khans, the ancient supported by the Turks, the latter upheld by the Russians, made war with fury. Sahim Guerey, protected by Catherine, had a Russian guard, whom the Tatars massacred through jealousy. This foreign guard had, in fact, been sent to be massacred ; that is to say, to furnish Catherine with a specious pretext for renewing hostilities. She accordingly sent new troops into the Crimea, and declared, through a manifesto, that henceforward that country was under the protection of Russia. The victories over the Ottomans did not prevent her labouring in the north to enlarge her power. Denmark saw revive, under her sceptre, the influence which Peter the First had formerly exercised over that kingdom. It is known that Peter the Third himself had made preparations to recover the Duchy of Sleswick, which formed part of Holstein, by force of arms, when he lost the throne and his life. The ambassadors of Catherine almost held the court of Denmark in tutelage. But a Count Bernstorff, Danish minister, contrived to escape from their insolent tyranny ; and his dexterity obtained the cession of the duchy on which Russia had claims, or desired to assert claims. Catherine, in this instance, was the dupe of her pride. Bernstorff persuaded her that it did not comport with her dignity as an empress to hold a small nook of earth by the tenure of vassalage ; it was a sacrifice which she soon regretted. She had

on Sweden the same designs which had been perpetuated in the cabinet of St. Petersburg since the rivalry of Charles XII. and Peter the Great. But here her policy pursued a more tortuous path, and only acted through the favour of a faction opposed to royal authority. It is known by what a sudden revolution Gustavus III. restored for a moment to that authority its pristine splendour, and snatched it from the ascendancy of the court of Russia; and it is also known by what a deplorable event he terminated his days. To discover the designs of Catherine, this prince resolved to visit St. Petersburg; but his presumptuous confidence betrayed him to the penetrating sagacity of the empress; she learned to fear him no longer, and amused herself by astonishing him by the magnificence which surrounded her throne. However, the Turks, ashamed of the conditions to which the victories of Rourmiantsoff had subjected them, took advantage of the usurpations of Catherine in the Crimea to break the treaty of Kaidnargi. New dissensions, new interests arose in Europe; and not to compromise, in a new war with the Porte, a time and a strength which she could apply to more important objects, Catherine signed the convention of Constantinople, which consecrated the independence of the Crimea, and annulled her pretensions on Wallachia and Moldavia. Nevertheless, these were only temporary and provisional measures on her part. At this juncture war broke out between Austria and Prussia on the subject of Bavaria, which the former of these powers claimed; and Catherine openly announced her intention of supporting the king of Prussia. The congress and peace of Teschen followed that declaration. For a long time, jealous of the English in the northern seas, she felt that she could, at least, with as much right as they, there arrogate an exclusive navigation, and finally emancipate Russian commerce from the restraints which had grown out of the privileges always granted to the subjects of Great Britain. The French ministers, Vergennes and St. Priest, skilfully took advantage of these inclinations of Catherine. They

had acquired claims to her gratitude by employing in her favour their credit with the Divan, at the epoch of the last treaty with the Turks. The naval confederation which followed shortly afterwards, under the name of the Armed Neutrality, also emanated from the talents of the Count of Vergennes.

But the grand project of the Empire of the East had always been the favourite dream of Catherine and the hope of Potemkin. Potemkin flattered himself with obtaining that immense viceroyalty, and probably again founding a new dynasty of Greek emperors. He advised Catherine to induce Joseph II. to enter into her plans for the invasion of the Crimea, by which operations were to be commenced; and this was the motive of Joseph in journeying to Mohilef, where he appeared under the name of Count Falkenstein. It falls not within our plan to detail the arrangements which formed the basis of this secret treaty.*

Up to this date we have seen Catherine faithful to the ambitious principles and vast plans of Peter I., whose genius she seemed desirous of resuscitating, to merit an equal fame. Now, however, forgetting in appearance the policy of that monarch, she sought the alliance of a power by him hated, despised, vilified. She sent ambassadors to Rome announcing her intention to protect the Jesuits, offered her empire as an asylum to men proscribed by different sovereigns of Europe, and displayed

* At that time travelling seemed the fashion among the sovereigns of Europe. The king of Denmark the first, and shortly afterwards Gustavus, prince royal of Sweden, with his brothers, visited the court of Louis XV. We have seen that same Gustavus, after having obtained the throne, repair to St. Petersburg to discuss and regulate with Catherine those interests which threatened to lead to their disunion. Prince Henry, brother to the king of Prussia, went in 1770 to negotiate with that princess for the dismemberment of Poland. Joseph II. visited Catherine at Mohilef in 1780, then travelled to Moscow, and returned by Petersburg. Scarcely had he quitted it than that city received Frederick William, nephew of the king of Prussia, sent by his uncle. Already the grand-duke of Russia had visited Berlin; in 1781, accompanied by his wife, he made a tour through Austria, Italy, and France.

her throne as their rallying-point. It is said that Catherine flattered herself with attracting with the Jesuits their immense wealth into her dominions. They were not to be ensnared; and this negotiation only served to irritate the Greek Church. Catherine vainly disavowed a curious letter which she had addressed to the Pope on this subject.*

It was then, as though she wished to make a glorious reparation to the manes of Peter the Great, whom she had insulted by flattering the head of the Latin Church, that, amid the administrative operations which occupied her, such as a new division of the provinces of her empire, she resolved on raising a monument to the glory of that monarch. The celebrated Falconnet, com-

* The following is the letter as given by Castera: "I know that your Holiness is very much embarrassed; but fear badly comports with your character. Your dignity cannot assent to a policy which wounds religion. The motives by which I grant my protection to the Jesuits are founded on reason and justice, as well as on the hope that they will be useful to my dominions. This peaceable order of innocent men will live in my empire, because of all Catholic communities it is the best calculated to instruct my subjects, and inspire them with sentiments of humanity, and the true principles of the Christian religion. I am resolved to support these priests against every power; and in that I only fulfil my duty, because I am their sovereign, and I regard them as faithful, useful, and innocent subjects. I the more desire to see four of them invested with the power of confirmation, at Petersburg and Moscow, as the two Catholic churches of that town are confined to their care. Who knows if Providence does not intend to make these pious men the instruments of a union long desired between the Greek and Roman Church? Let your Holiness dismiss all fear; for I will support with all my strength the rights you have received from Jesus Christ." The pope sent to Russia the Nuncio Archetti, who consecrated the Archbishop and the Coadjutor of Mohilef, and consented, in the name of the pope, to all that Catherine demanded. As the reward of the docility of Archetti, that princess solicited for him, and obtained, a cardinal's hat. At the same time, the pope declared, by a brief, to the other powers of Europe, who had proscribed the Jesuits, that he intended to maintain that by which Clement XIV. had suppressed them. Catherine permitted the establishment of a seminary of Jesuits, the direction of which was confided to Father Gabriel Denkiowitz, named Vicar-General of his order. Benilawski, coadjutor of the Archbishop of Mohilef, was sent to Rome in the quality of Russian ambassador.

missioned to execute it, conceived, to heighten the effect of the colossal statue he had finished, the design of a pedestal whose character should of itself express a grand idea. It was a rude rock, emblem of Russia, savage and uncultivated, rendered fruitful by the labours of Peter I. At eleven versts from St. Petersburg was found, in a marsh near the Gulf of Finland, an enormous block, which chance seemed to have there deposited to second the genius of the artist. To the creation of monuments which eternise glory, Catherine added the institution of those honorary decorations which excite men to merit them. The order of St. George, that of St. Vladimir, owe their existence to her.

But always pursuing her grand projects, she built towns on the road which led to Constantinople. That of Cherson, whose name awakens poetical reminiscences, partly owed its rapid rise, its forty thousand inhabitants, its dockyards and its vessels, to the ambition of Potemkin. Catherine had suddenly realised the invasion of the Crimea. Instead of rushing to arms, the Turks amused themselves with answering the manifesto by which she pretended to justify, in the name of the most sacred rights, that unworthy spoliation, accomplished by the butchery of thirty thousand Tatars, of every age and sex,—a butchery executed in the name and under the eyes of Potemkin. The Turks, terrified at the number of troops already assembled on the frontiers, preferred negotiating to fighting; but they lost by the last treaty signed at Constantinople all that fresh defeats would have cost them. The Crimea, the Isle of Taman, and nearly all the Kouban, remained to the empress. She owed these advantages to Potemkin, on whom she conferred the surname of Tauricus. The credit and glory of this favourite appeared at this moment to have reached their zenith. The death of Panin, and particularly of Gregory Orloff, left him without rivals. The first died through vexation at his disgrace; and Orloff, if we may credit the rumours that were circulated, was indebted to the perfidy of Po-

temkin for a more deplorable end. Raving madness carried him to the tomb, and it was attributed to poison. Perhaps remorse had some share in his malady.

The peace just concluded with the Turks allowed Catherine to follow up the execution of the schemes of Peter I. against Persia. For a century that empire, always a prey to revolutions, favoured, by the sanguinary rivalries of twenty conflicting legitimacies, the pretensions of external enemies. Catherine protected one of the factions and one of the ambitious competitors. Nevertheless her plan could not be realised; and, in spite of the vessels with which she had covered the Caspian Sea, she did not succeed in establishing with those countries any solid or profitable intercourse for the commerce of her empire. She also made, but with more success, attempts to renew that which Russia had formerly carried on with China, and created a new connection with Japan.

Hurried away by the interest and rapid succession of political events, we have for a moment lost sight of the intrigues and revolutions of the seraglio, for that word is appropriately suited to the court of Catherine. Disgusted with Zoritz, through the ignorance of that young Servian, the empress gave him a successor. It was Korkasoff, with whom history must not confound him who afterwards led an army into Switzerland. A simple sergeant in the guards, this latter had not received a better education, and nature had not gifted him with any intellect. He held intimacy with the beautiful Countess De Bruce, the friend and favourite of Catherine; and their imprudence furnished the empress with proof, the most unequivocal and the most mortifying, of what she is said to have refused crediting. It is just to remark, that she avenged herself for once with moderation and dignity. Lanskoi succeeded Korkasoff. Of all the lovers, he was the most beloved, and deserved to be; for the development of his mind was the work of Catherine.* He died in the flower

* He was also superior to all the others by his exterior advantages:

of his age. Catherine was inconsolable. It is stated, that on rallying from the protracted sorrow into which this loss had plunged her, she privately married Potemkin, won back to him by the tender efforts he had made to dissipate her despair. He alone had been permitted to interrupt the solitude to which she devoted herself for three months in the palace of Tzarskoe-zelo. However this may be, Potemkin never showed himself jealous of the rights of a husband; on the contrary, from that moment he openly added to the number of his employments that of purveyor to the pleasures of the empress; henceforward his despotism was absolute.

The secret treaty concluded at Mohilef had led to that of the league of the electors, to which England acceded with an eagerness which shocked Catherine and Potemkin. England was doubly punished by the refusal, or at least by the delay of the renewal of the treaty of commerce, and by the conclusion with France of a treaty which may be considered the fruit of the skill of the French minister Segur, who had perfectly succeeded at the court of St. Petersburg and with the empress. After having conquered the Crimea, to which she restored the ancient name of Taurida, Catherine desired to visit that province. This journey is one of the most curious examples of the efforts of flattery to amuse and deceive sovereigns. A great lord has been spoken of, who, to afford an agreeable surprise to Louis XIV., felled, on the instant, the trees of a vast forest, which displeased the monarch; but this was a paltry act of courtier-devotion compared with the gigantic deeds that Potemkin executed. The course of the Dnieper, hitherto obstructed by enormous rocks, forming cataracts called the Falls of the Borysthenes, freed from these obstacles by immense labours, afforded to fifty galleys, which bore the empress and her suite,

never were seen more beautiful features, a countenance of more winning expression, a figure more noble and elegant, so complete a model of striking perfection.—CASTERA.

an easy navigation. The two banks of the river presented the most exhilarating and animated appearance of which imagination could conceive. Villages, and in the distance well-built towns,—happy populations pursuing their rustic labours amid songs and dances, the unequivocal proof of comfort and prosperity,—all concurred to give the highest idea of the happiness of these countries, and Catherine was enchanted. But the whole of this picture was an illusion,—a vain shadow,—evoked for a moment in the midst of a desert by the gold and the caprice of the despot Potemkin. These distant towns were miserable imitations of theatrical scenery; the villages constructed for a day, and born yesterday, were destroyed on the morrow; these populations, so gay, so happy, collected from a long distance, marched under the lash from station to station, to reproduce before the eyes of the empress, under a new costume, their misery travestied into content, their tears into shouts of joy. They left, and the sad silence of the desert resumed all its rights over that soil for a moment astonished at their presence.* The ancient lover Poniatowski had wished to be present at this festival, and went to wait for the empress at Kanief. They had not seen each other for twenty-three years. Poniatowski arrived with the hope of obtaining some succours and some concessions in favour of his fragmentary throne. Catherine gave him the riband of Saint Andrew, and promised the rest, with the secret reservation of granting nothing which might retard the ruin of Poland. The emperor of Austria, Joseph II., had also repaired to Catherinoslaf, to swell the train of the haughty sovereign. That monarch, then regarded as the most powerful in Europe, affected to be no more than the most illustrious of her courtiers, and did not even omit to gratify the presumptuous Potemkin, whom he raised to the dignity of a prince of his empire.

* Most curious particulars of this monster hoax may be found in the *Memoirs of the Count Segur*. J. D.

Arrived at Cherson, on traversing the interior of the city, Catherine read on a gate which looked towards the east a Greek inscription, which signified, "Through this you must pass to reach Byzantium." There were in this town a great many foreigners, who all seemed to have come to honour this triumphal journey. There were seen Greeks, Tatars, French, Belgians, Spaniards, English, Poles.* After so many and such superb festivals, the grand sovereign returned to her capital, there to recognise the wretched state of her finances, hear the mournful cries of her people oppressed by famine, and finally see herself menaced by the embarrassments of an approaching war.

The kings of Prussia (Frederick William) and England were the enemies who were making preparations against Catherine: the first mortified at the little respect which the empress testified to him, though she had on all occasions paid a marked deference to the great Frederick; and the second jealous of the treaty of commerce she had signed with France. This treaty had been concluded shortly before the journey into the Crimea, through the exertions of the ambassador, Count Segur. These two powers also induced the Ottoman Porte to take up arms, on the ground that certain conditions of the treaty of Constantinople had been very badly observed by Russia, which was perfectly true. Too many circumstances proved that the empress always nourished hostile designs against the Turks; and even the pompous journey she made through the Crimea seemed only to have been undertaken to insult them. Moreover, Potemkin desired war; and the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, who was only his agent, was ordered not to spare the Divan any of those haughty impertinences which might render hostilities inevitable. Potemkin, formerly the lover, remained the minister.

* Among the French were Edward Dillon and Alexander Lameth; among the Spaniards, Miranda, who was afterwards a general in the service of the French republic; and, still later, met his death fighting for the Spanish Americans against the royal troops.

However, it was his interest to make himself indispensable, in order not to be replaced by some favourite, who, on quitting his post, might have the ambition and the capacity requisite for exercising influence in affairs. Momanoff, who, during the journey, was the accredited lover, wielded over the mind of his sovereign absolute power, and consequently might prove dangerous. Catherine, however, was not inclined for war, and flattered herself with peace, whilst Potemkin rendered it impracticable. The French minister also feared a rupture which might involve his country with England, and M. de Segur despatched a courier to M. de Choiseul Gouffier, ambassador at Constantinople, to furnish him the means of calming the Divan, by representing the real intentions of the empress ; she was disposed to make large concessions to avoid war. Unfortunately, the courier of M. de Segur was assassinated, and war (1788) was declared by the Porte. Potemkin laid siege to Oczakow, without any resources to continue and complete it with success. All the operations were conducted by that famous minister with a want of order and activity characteristic of his mind, more capable of conceiving vast plans than skilled to realise them. At Kisbourn (1787), Suwarrow, already a general officer, distinguished himself by a great bravery too much tarnished by ferocity. In the following year, Roumiantsoff took Katchin, or Koczin, on the Dnieper. The Emperor Joseph (1788), in person, took Sobach by assault, and his generals made themselves masters of Doubitza. No less unfortunate on the other element, the Turks saw their fleet destroyed in the Black Sea by Admiral Ouchakoff, and the prince of Nassau-Siegen who commanded under him. The Turks fought as madmen, but nevertheless lost fifty-seven vessels. The crews of those which were stranded were massacred by Suwarrow, whose cruel vigilance guarded the coast. The capitan-pacha who experienced this terrible reverse was the same whose fleet had been burned at Tchesmé. There was not sufficient indulgence for these misfortunes at the seraglio ; and,

on an order transmitted from Constantinople, the unfortunate capitan was strangled, or strangled himself. The capture of Oczakow, a very important fortress, crowned so much success ; after a siege, however, which the indolence and carelessness of Potemkin had protracted to ten months. This man must have been born with an extraordinary share of good fortune, not to have failed in all his enterprises through want of foresight, activity, and judgment. With these defects, so important in a captain, his badly-conceived plans were ordinarily only *extravagant wishes, vast projects*, disproportioned to the means of their accomplishment. He was prodigal of the lives of his soldiers, and then wept as a child over those whom he had sacrificed. This Russian, so famous, was a strange compound of great qualities and very extraordinary little conceits ; so much so that, by a perpetual contrast with himself, he excited more surprise than admiration or esteem. However, astonishment was the only sentiment which he seemed jealous of inspiring ; and he openly announced for mankind that contempt which is usually found in those whom fortune and men have too much flattered.*

It was at the capture of Oczakow that Suwarrow, possessing in a puny body an intrepid and warlike soul, commenced his great renown by mounting to the assault, and making a horrible carnage of the Ottomans. The Russians were somewhat less successful at Kalkousra. But whilst all the forces of Catherine were thus occupied in the south of her empire, the king of Sweden, formerly her chevalier and friend, armed in concert with England and Russia, and prepared to surprise Petersburg. All would have been over with that proud capital, the work of Peter the Great, had Gustavus postponed his declaration of war for four days ; for the Russian squadron, which was anchored at Cronstadt, would have weighed anchor to sail towards the Archi-

* Such at least is the idea formed of that celebrated man in the writings of those who have treated him with the most favour,—M. de Segur and the Prince de Ligne.

pelago. That young and adventurous king, who thus precipitated a rupture, to give his reign a chivalric and warlike glory, without having calculated his strength or his opportunity, learned to his cost that the Swedes were no longer Scandinavians, and that the reign of Odin had long ceased in the north. The adversities of Charles XII. might have taught him experience ; but he had forgotten them, and only desired to remember the traditions of his fabulous ancestors, and not the historical examples of his forefathers.

He was repulsed and beaten by sea and land. At the same time Denmark, allied to Russia by recent treaties, attacked him in the heart of his dominions, and took from him the city of Gottenburg, the second place in his kingdom. In the following campaign, the Russians took Bender ; and the military operations would have been more decisive, had Potemkin, who united jealousy to his other vices, not thwarted and (1789) circumvented Marshal Roumiantsoff, whose great reputation now threw him in the shade. Wearied by reverses, the Ottoman Porte opened conferences at Foksani. England and Prussia actively plotted to prevent peace, and excited against Joseph II., the ally of the empress, so many embarrassments in Hungary, Brabant, and the territory of Liege, that the death of that prince was accelerated by chagrin. The fortune of Catherine triumphed over all. Gustavus, every where beaten, signed a treaty of peace (1790), which only gave him the advantage of buying corn in Livonia. The Turks, who alone remained to be conquered, experienced at Ismail a new disaster, which crushed them. Suwarrow, having received from Potemkin orders to capture the place in three days, made two successive assaults ; twice repulsed, he rushed a third time to the ramparts, at the foot of which 15,000 Russians were stretched dead. A valour so furious having at length conquered the resistance of the Ottomans, the ill-fated Ismail, given up to all the resentment, all the ferocity of the soldiers, became the vast tomb of its inhabitants and garri-

son : 35,000 Turks there perished, and Suwarrow might have bathed himself in blood. The booty of that victory was immense ; and the wreck of the population, the unfortunate remnant of a massacre which the weariness of the soldiers had alone spared, was transplanted into Russia. (1791.) The negotiations commenced at Foksani, and continued at Jassy, having led to no result, the war was continued under Prince Repnin, who had replaced Potemkin. Jealous of equalling, and perhaps surpassing, the glory of that rival, after having captured Babada, a rich and commercial city of Bulgaria, he marched against the grand vizier, and with 40,000 men attacked 100,000, whom he vanquished and dispersed at Motzim. The peace imposed on the Ottomans by so many misfortunes was no less necessary to Russia, on account of the bad state of the finances ; Repnin received an order to conclude it. Potemkin, agonised at the double glory his successor had acquired, vainly hurried to Moldavia, to prevent the signature of the treaty. All was settled when he reached Jassy. He departed full of vexation and rage for Oczakow, his conquest ; but, before arriving there, his destiny was accomplished ; he expired in the country, at the foot of a tree, being only fifty-five years of age.

We should, without doubt, deceive the expectations of the reader, if we did not add some details concerning this remarkable man. A child of the blind caprice of accident, he had all the vices which such a fortune supposes ; and never was an Asiatic satrap, never was an ignorant despot, more irritable or more haughty. He entertained towards foreigners that stupid contempt which characterises the inferior classes of his nation. Several French emigrants, who had sufficiently distinguished themselves at the siege of Oczakow to merit marks of his esteem and gratitude, only experienced the effects of his brutality.* Conversing one day with them concerning the French Revolution,

* Roger Damas, Langeron, Richelieu. After this dispute with Potemkin, Langeron immediately retired to Austria.

Potemkin had the impudence to say, addressing himself to Langeron, "Colonel, your countrymen are fools. I would only require the grooms in my stable to bring them to their senses." The indignant emigrant proudly answered, "Prince, I do not believe you would succeed with all your army." At these words, Potemkin rose in anger, and threatened to send Langeron into Siberia. Potemkin frequently went so far as to strike his general officers. One day he gave a blow to a foreign major, who, in the presence of the mistress of the despot, had praised the beauty of another woman. The fortune of Potemkin was immense, and arose entirely from the presents of his sovereign. On a single occasion—that is to say, on his return to St. Petersburg after his campaign against the Turks—she gave him a palace estimated at 600,000 roubles, and a dress embroidered with diamonds which had cost at least 200,000. In his personal luxury there was something of the gigantic: his table usually cost 1000 roubles a day; it was covered with the most delicate viands and the rarest fruits. He required cherries in the depth of winter, and paid for them a rouble each. When he gave a festival, he threw money among the people. But, in the midst of so much magnificence, this savage Lucullus never paid his debts, and maltreated his creditors.* Finally, to complete his portrait, this great lord with *naked feet*† united on his head all the titles, all the decorations, and all the honours that the first subject in Russia could acquire, unless he was the brother of the sovereign or his heir. The majority of the monarchs of Europe loaded

* When any one called on him for money, he said to Popoff, his private secretary, "Why do you not pay that man?" and by a sign he made him to understand in what manner the applicant was to be treated. If he opened his hand, Popoff gave money; if he closed it, the creditor got nothing. He committed acts of knavery and baseness to extort small sums of money. —CASTERA.

† Because at his own house he was usually dressed in the most slovenly manner, with his feet bare. Even when he received foreigners of distinction and ministers, he lolled under a canopy, and did not deign to ask them to be seated.

him with their favours, and courted his support without gaining his gratitude. He wore the ribands of their orders, and received their presents, as a legitimate tribute. If his life was a full and continued series of prosperity, his death seems to have been an additional happiness, since it was unexpected and sudden. To arrive at so brilliant a fortune, to attain to an eminence so lofty, Potemkin had no need of great talents or great qualities; he only required a handsome face and an athletic constitution; the vices of a corrupt woman did the rest. This golden-headed colossus had its feet in the mire; when it was overturned, those who had long admired it blushed at their homage, unable to conceive that a man whose only quality was audacity, whose only talent was intrigue, and who united in his person all vices and all defects, should so long have domineered over the empress and the empire. Notwithstanding his indifference and carelessness, the death of that man left a void in the administration of affairs, which he, for a long time, had solely directed; and many ministers were summoned to divide the burden. Besborodko, who had served under Potemkin (1793); the favourite Plato Zouboff, who aspired to pass from the boudoir to the political cabinet; and Nicholas Soltikoff, shared the administration. Some others, though without any title, exercised great influence; among them is cited an intriguer named Markoff, whom Plato Zouboff had taken for his guide in this new career. It was in one of the frequent councils at which these *statesmen* discussed the interests of the empire, that the last partition and absolute ruin of Poland was decided upon.

Catherine could not pardon the Polish nation for the acts by which they had endeavoured to preserve their existence and restore their dignity, after the invasion of 1775. Those acts were the abrogation, by the National Diet of 1788, of the constitution which the perfidy of their despoilers had violently imposed at that first epoch of their misfortunes; the alliance which they had recently contracted with the king of Prussia; next, the promul-

gation of a new constitution, which, more recently still (1791), had taken place; finally, she imputed to the Poles criminality for applauding the republican principles which triumphed in France. But independently of the personal passions of the empress, there existed around her other reasons, which rendered the ruin of that unfortunate country inevitable; it was necessary to satisfy the cupidity of that crowd of corrupt men who pressed on the steps of the throne, and whose immense depredations, by exhausting Russia, had nevertheless not enriched them, so scandalous was prodigality under the reign of the Magnificent Catherine. Before the invasion, before the destiny of unhappy Poland was consummated, they had already divided it, and given themselves, by special laws, lands and castles which suited their tastes. The Russians went, the imperial ukase in hand, to expel from his home the peaceful Pole, who had not emigrated, who had not even taken up arms, and who saw himself reduced to abandon his inheritance, dragging to a distance, with his misery, his wife and children. Spoliations of this kind were innumerable. When this new invasion had been announced to the Diet by a declaration of war (1793), the whole nation displayed a patriotic enthusiasm.* However, the Poles could only put under arms 30,000 men, whilst 120,000 Russians advanced to surround

* We have here adopted the opinion of the majority of writers who have related these events, but must confess that the universality of this patriotic devotedness has been formally contested by others, whose habitual exactitude is irreproachable; the judicious Kock thus writes: "The patriots were divided in opinion; and the king, though he seemed to favour their exertions, secretly seconded the interests of the friends of Russia. The nobles, who ought to have displayed energy, were little disposed efficaciously to support the cause of liberty. Every contribution weighed on them; and they were as opposed to a rising in a mass as to a levy of additional troops, which deprived them of cultivators; they trembled to lose the rights and privileges which they exclusively enjoyed. It resulted that Kosciusko had not the power to bring into the field forces proportionate to those of the Russians and Prussians, who acted in concert to defeat the measures of the insurgents."—KOCK, *Tableau des Révolutions de l'Europe*.

them. In a hundred fights the most intrepid valour triumphed over numbers, compensated for deficiency of arms, and supplied all resources. The peasants, armed with scythes, routed the Russian battalions; and never did a nation, expiring on a battle-field, exhibit a more heroic agony. Then it was that the famous Kosciusko acquired his glorious fame; and, after having combated and struggled with a fortitude worthy of eternal admiration, only surrendered his arms when he fell in the midst of his countrymen, bleeding and pierced with wounds. All who survived that last battle of Maciejowice shut themselves up in the faubourg of Praga, and were thither pursued by Suwarrow. It is known that that ferocious general, having made himself master of Warsaw, put to the sword not only the soldiers, but all the inhabitants of Praga without distinction. More than 20,000 persons, of every age and sex, were mercilessly massacred, and the rear-guard of the army of Suwarrow marched in blood through the whole of the faubourg to enter Warsaw. On receiving the news of this butchery, Catherine was in bed; she rose, and rushing half-naked into the apartment of her women, exclaimed, "Get up. I am avenged. The Poles are exterminated!" The courts of Petersburg and Berlin divided at their pleasure the remnant of Poland. Stanislaus Augustus, that king whose royalty, the work of Catherine, seems only to have been a long and bitter mockery in that cruel woman, was confined at Grodno, and there lived obscurely on a pension granted by the empress; whilst Repnin, appointed governor-general of the invaded provinces, there displayed the pomp of a sovereign. By the treaty concluded between the three partitioning powers (for the court of Vienna, seeing the two others pounce on the prey, had abjured its neutrality, and sent an army into the territory of the republic), Russia obtained all that portion of Lithuania that remained to Poland down to the Niemen, the palatinates of Brzesc and Novogrodek, and from thence to the Bug; she also secured the greatest part of Samogitia, with all Courland and Semigaglia; she

had besides the territory of Chelin, dependent on Little Poland, and the remainder of Volhynia, in the whole about 2000 square miles. Prussia and Austria divided the rest. The destruction of the kingdom and republic of Poland entirely changed the political system of the north, by annulling the treaties of Oliva and Moscow, on which that system reposed. The barrier which those treaties had established between Russia, Prussia, and Austria was thus thrown down; and those powers, formerly separated from each other by vast provinces, became immediate neighbours.

After having narrated the two successful attempts of Catherine on unfortunate Poland, it remains for us to state what she meditated against France, whose rising liberty and republican government were, in her eyes, a great crime. It is known that she received and encouraged illustrious emigrants, and furnished aid for the success of their monarchical crusade, of which, at her instigation, Gustavus III. was to have been the chief; but, at this juncture, that prince fell under the blow of Ankastroem, and Catherine seemed less disposed to interfere in that great quarrel, after the world had recognised the warlike valour of the French republicans. However, as she saw in it the certain cause of the disturbance of Europe, she finally yielded to the solicitations of the favourite Zouboff, the intrigues of the English minister and of Prince Esterhazy, and united to the English squadron a fleet of twelve ships of the line and eight frigates, exacting from England a million sterling of subsidies. Thus England did not long retain so costly an ally.

Finally, the haughty *autocratrice* turned her arms against Persia. Her generals had invaded the province of Daghestan; while on the other side she was about to follow up her favourite project—war against the Ottomans, and their expulsion from Europe. This hope became the more probable in consequence of her new treaties with England and Austria. These powers engaged to assist her in her plans against Turkey, on condition that

she concurred in the coalition against France in a more effective manner than she had done with her fleet of twelve old vessels. Thus the limits of the vast empire of Catherine were about to be extended to the Bosphorus of Thrace, when death, deceiving her hopes, cut her off by a sudden blow. On the morning of the 6th of November, 1796, after having taken coffee, and conversed gaily with her women, she passed into her cabinet; a few moments afterwards a loud shriek was heard, and her attendants, on entering, saw the empress stretched dead, her face turned against the floor, as if she had fallen down struck with terror by a formidable vision. It was only, it is said, an attack of apoplexy.

We have spoken sufficiently in detail of the reign and actions of this sovereign, to relieve ourselves of the task of characterising them again. As to her physical organisation, every one knows that she was handsome; but let us add, that it was that style of beauty whose charms cover some indefinable evil,—a beauty which the condemned angels borrow when they are supposed to mingle with mortals. A painter, it is said, proposed to represent her as a mythological nymph or deity, full of loveliness, presenting with her left hand palms and flowers, whilst with her right hand she concealed a dagger and the torch of the furies. That painter had a just conception of his model. Voltaire had named her the Semiramis of the North; and she appeared to have accepted that poetical compliment with pleasure. The title suited her in two ways; because the sovereign of Babylon had stained her hands in the blood of her husband, and usurped his power. It is thus that Voltaire himself represents the wife of Ninus, on the faith of ancient traditions, in his tragedy on that subject. We may therefore suppose that Voltaire concealed the most bitter satire under the mask of ingenious flattery. However, what a feeble compensation is this for all the falsehoods which he uttered in reference to Russia! The character of Catherine was elevated, firm, virile. She made herself respected

and feared by a nation who detested her ; but in private life, a mere woman, she exhibited inconceivable weaknesses. Her favourites, with whom she would never share the throne, whom she dismissed and disgraced at pleasure, exercised over her, in the intimacy of an illicit intercourse, a tyrannical, a humiliating empire. Orloff and Potemkin pushed abuse even to the extreme point. In fact, the indomitable Catherine allowed herself to be *beaten* by her lovers, only opposing her tears to their ferocity ! She was desirous of appearing to love literature and the arts ; but it was without knowing their noble emotions, without feeling their charms. The only paintings which decorated her boudoir were two,—one representing the burning of the Ottoman fleet in the Bay of Tchesmé, and the other the massacre of the Poles in the faubourg of Praga.*

She aggrandised Russia at the expense of the positive strength of that empire ; she undertook many things, completed but few ; and was false to her age in speaking of liberty and philanthropy with philosophers who did not always tell the truth. Posterity, in characterising her reign, is forced to view it much less as a grand epoch of political movement, than as a striking example of all kinds of disorder and disorganisation. To say that she united the morals of a Messalina to the black combinations of a Fredegonda, would expose us to the reproach of excessive severity. Let us, however, bear in mind the assassination of Peter III., the murder of Prince Ivan, the fate of the young Tarrakanoff, and so many other illustrious victims immolated in darkness for her security. The scandalous chapter of her amours is still the most innocent part of her history. What amours ! what a train of lovers ! The German writers, whose exemplary exactitude allows nothing to be lost, have published a biographical account of these *functionaries*, illustrious or obscure ; and out of it they have formed a huge catalogue. But we do not think that any *savant* of Tübingen dare to boast that the banks of Montplaisir,

* *Mémoires Secrets.*

or the groves of Tzarskoe-Zelo, have revealed to him all their secrets.* To obtain a smile from the empress, and even more, only two things were required,—personal appearance and opportunity. In truth, the title of lovers does not rigorously account for all the objects of her fancies. As to those whom their birth, talent, or a more durable affection, brought forward on the political scene, they have been nearly all cited in the course of this narrative, with the exception of Vistotsky, an officer of the guards, who was about two months in favour, and Yermoloff. All among them received, in lands, money, or jewels, a sum calculated at a milliard of French money by Castera, who declares that he was well informed on the subject. Catherine, however, pretended that there was much economy, even political economy, in thus disposing of the finances of the empire. In 1774, writing to Voltaire, to whose favourable opinion she always seemed to attach great importance, she said: “Do not judge, I beg, of our finance by those of other powers of Europe, who are ruined; you would do me injustice. Although we have had war for three years, we build, and every thing proceeds as in peace. For two years no new tax has been created; and if we can again take one or two districts, the cost of the war is paid. I shall, sir, always be satisfied with myself when I receive your approbation.”

Thus Catherine allowed herself to be deceived by that delusive axiom of conquerors, that “war feeds war;” but even if she spoke truly in 1774, she could not hold the same language in 1796. She had ruined her empire; only one proof of this is required. On preparing new levies, at the solicitation of the powers already coalesced against France, she had been forced to create *assignats*, and borrow heavy loans abroad. Gold, silver, copper, all simultaneously failed. The Prince Scherbatof, he who rendered himself famous by writing the history of his country, observed: “If this woman had lived to a more advanced

* See the work entitled *Russische Gunstlinge*, published at Tübingen in 1809.

age, she would have dragged Russia into her tomb.”* Notwithstanding so many crimes and faults, this so famous reign of Catherine has not only found passionate admirers among the servile courtiers of dazzling power, but also eager apologists among historians; and it will not be unprofitable to report, in conclusion, the opinion of some of them. We shall speak no more of Voltaire, who never named her otherwise than as the *great and admirable*, and who probably mocked at her, as he had mocked at Frederick, at so many others, and at the whole human race, which appeared to him an object of derision; but the German Eichhorn says, gravely: “If to be worthy of reigning can render the usurpation of power legitimate, assuredly the revolution which placed Catherine on the throne may be considered legitimate. On taking the reins of government, she found the empire feeble, tottering, and the administration almost disorganised; and at her death, she left it to Paul I., highly respected abroad, powerfully organised within, and wisely directed in all the branches of the public service.” Such is what is called the sincerity and honour of history. Rulhière says, in terminating his pretended impartial work, entitled *Anecdotes sur la Russie*, and which made so much noise at its appearance, that “Catherine recompensed the fidelity of the friends of Peter III., and governed with so much goodness and glory, that the fame of her reign attracted from Europe into Asia a numerous population among her dominions.”

We are ignorant who composed this imbecile population,

* M. de Segur affirms, on the contrary, that the revenues of Russia had been augmented one-third during the reign of Catherine. It is amusing to see how statesmen, of minds equally superior and equally competent to ascertain the truth, are completely opposed on a point of such importance. However, M. de Segur has added, that Russia could not make war without raising loans; and this consideration seemed to him very encouraging against her ambition (see *La Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe*, 3d edit. tom. i.). It is a very remarkable fact, noted in that work on the subject of Russia, that under Catherine church-property had been re-annexed to the imperial domains, which must have made a considerable augmentation to the revenues of the crown.

enticed by the maternal government of Catherine ; but we have recorded that the entire horde of the Eleuths emigrated from Russia, to withdraw themselves from the cruel rapacity of the lieutenants of Catherine. Finally, M. Levesque, a great partisan of the for and against, and who mistakes the feeble pulsations of a conscience without energy, and of a morality without a fixed basis, for the inspirations of justice, expresses himself in these terms: “ Catherine has shed too much lustre over her reign, she has caused her name to be too loudly sounded in Europe, she has been too much praised by the distributors of glory, not to be included among the great sovereigns of her age ; but this great sovereign did much evil to her neighbours and to her own people. On her different judgments will be pronounced, according as men consider her virtues or her vices, her talents or her weaknesses, her fine actions or her faults, the proofs of her goodness or the crimes imputed to her. Equitable judges accord to her, under these two points of view, a just sentiment of esteem for her praiseworthy qualities, admiration for what she achieved of the grand and the useful, compassion for her political and moral irregularities, and the benefit of the doubt on the crime charged on her memory.” This is Christian ; nevertheless, we shall persist in our astonishment at finding virtues imputed to a woman who, having abjured all modesty, dethroned and afterwards assassinated her husband : for, in fact, the assassins of Peter III. were her friends ; and far from being prosecuted for their crimes, they were loaded with favours. To us the memory of such a sovereign seems only capable of inspiring the most profound horror. As to compassion, we think it ought to be reserved for writers who, holding the appointments and receiving the pensions of the Academy, dare to plume themselves on promising to speak the truth. It is an irregularity which, indeed, deserves pity.

M. Levesque, in his *Histoire Critique de la République Romaine*, written with a view to destroy the universal and in-

veterate prejudices entertained in favour of the pretended virtues of the Romans of free Rome, shows himself, according to the expression of Malte-Brun, "justly indignant at the flatteries which history has heaped on the oppressors of the universe." "The bleeding ghosts of Numantia," says the eloquent panegyrist, "press around him, and denounce to his avenging muse the injustice, the crimes, the pillages, the massacres, which the servile admiration of centuries has extolled as glorious exploits. He attacks the mistress of the world even in the curule chair; he rends the triumphal purple, and discloses to us under its deceitful veil, instead of the legislative goddess of nations, a fury reeking with blood and eager for destruction."

In thus pronouncing sentence on the first people in the world, it seems that M. Levesque imposed on himself the obligation of being somewhat less indulgent to the Tatars; but as the composition of the *Histoire de Russie* preceded by some years that of the *Histoire Romaine Critique*, we must believe that, at this first epoch, the muse that made him see and do all that Malte-Brun states had not yet spoken: otherwise, it is certain that, in the *Annales de la Russie* as well as in the *Fastes Romains*, he would have found injustices, crimes, pillages, massacres, burnings; and, above all, without a prosopopœia, he would have found a fury reeking with blood and eager for destruction. In spite of all the special pleadings of Levesque, his book greatly discontented Catherine, if we may depend on the author of the famous *Mémoires Secrets*, who, on his part, has much more severely judged that sovereign. "The close of her reign," said he, "was disastrous for the people of the empire. All the machinery of government was deranged; each general, each governor, each chief of a department, had become a private despot. Title, justice, impunity, was sold to the highest bidder; a score of oligarchs, under the auspices of a favourite, divided Russia among themselves, pillaged the finances or allowed them to be pillaged, and disputed for the spoils of their victims. The most menial ser-

vants, ay even slaves, obtained employments, and in a short time amassed considerable wealth. Catherine, far from investigating the impure source of these ephemeral riches, applauded the shameless luxury of the public robbers, which she took as a proof of the prosperity of her reign. Never was plunder so easy and so general. A minister knew nearly what each of his signatures was worth to his secretary; and a colonel did not hesitate to share with a general the profits he levied on his soldiers. Commencing with the recognised favourite, and descending to the lowest functionary, all regarded the national property as an El Dorado to be conquered, and rushed upon it with the same avidity as the populace do on an ox given them to be roasted. Orloff, Potemkin, and Panin alone filled their places with some dignity: the two former displayed talent and a vast ambition; Panin was intelligent and patriotic, he also possessed some virtues. But, speaking generally, never was there any thing so little as the nobles during the last years of the reign of Catherine; without knowledge, without ideas, without elevation of mind, without probity, they had not even that outside honour which is to loyalty what hypocrisy is to virtue: harsh as pachas, exacting as toll-collectors, thievish as lacqueys, and virtuous as the waiting-women of the theatre, it may be said they were the dregs of the empire. Thus, almost all the men in place and credit during this reign were upstarts. New princes and counts issued in swarms from the festivals of Catherine; and, if we except the Soltikoffs, not one great family was in favour. Any where else but in Russia this would not be an evil; but it was a real calamity for an empire where the rich nobility are the only class who have any education, and sometimes the only honour. Moreover, to change at every instance ministers and favourites, who enrich themselves and carry away their treasure, is the greatest scourge to a state. The government of Catherine, mild and moderate immediately around her, was arbitrary and frightful at a distance. The man who, directly or indirectly,

enjoyed the protection of the favourite, exercised public tyranny ; he bearded his superiors, and violated, with impunity, justice, discipline, and the ukases. The usurper of a throne which she desired to retain, Catherine was obliged to caress her accomplices ; they had purchased impunity by their crimes. A foreigner in an empire where she ruled, she sought to identify herself with the nation by flattering its tastes and its prejudices ; but she did not desire either to enlighten or enfranchise it ; and when she saw the French Revolution, alarmed and repenting her intercourse with the philosophers, she would have immediately retrograded with her people two or three centuries. In enduring the reign of Catherine and her numerous favourites, the Russian people proved themselves the most degraded population on the earth. The ten last years of her reign raised her criminal ambition to its height. It was then that the end of the political wire which moved Europe, and which had slipped through the fingers of France, to oscillate from Berlin to Vienna and London, was fixed in the hand of a woman who pulled it at her pleasure. That immense empire to her enslaved, the inexhaustible resources she drew from the people and a soil still virgin,—the excessive luxury of her court, the barbaric pomp of her nobles, the wealth and regal grandeur of her favourites, the glorious exploits of her armies, and the gigantic range of her ambition, extorted a sort of admiration, and threw a veil over her crimes.”

STATE OF MANNERS AND SOCIETY IN RUSSIA AT THE CLOSE OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Every one knows the efforts made by Peter the Great to polish the manners of his barbarous people, and Europeanise them, if we may use the word. But we may judge of the results of this experiment from considering the character of the master himself, so little versed in that art of politeness and good breeding which he proposed to teach ; a prince, all whose festivals

were disgusting bacchanalian orgies ; who chastised with a stick his first minister and the principal lords of his court ; whose gallant munificence towards the objects of his amorous caprices never exceeded four or five roubles ; so fond of low company, that he ran to the harbour when a Dutch vessel arrived, to eat and drink with the sailors ; finally, so filthy that he played at hunting lice on a table with the first person whom he chanced to meet. Peter the Great, having remarked in his travels that women set the fashion and polished manners among the civilised nations of Europe, and that the regard and deference paid to them in countries somewhat less enslaved than his own were the source and standard of the urbanity which more or less distinguished the inhabitants, wished to have assemblies, *réunions*, parties in which women, contrary to ancient custom, began to figure. However, his despotic rudeness invented the penalty of inflicting a glass of brandy to be drunk by every one who offended against the rules of ceremonial etiquette, no matter what their sex was ; so that, observes Voltaire, the honourable company often returned home intoxicated, but not corrected.*

However, some manners and usages from France, Germany, and England were ultimately introduced with more success, as

* The glass of brandy with which he punished persons badly brought up recalls another whim of this eccentric despot. He had appointed governor of Moscow, and invested with all the exterior attributes of supreme power, a gross and ferocious boyar, who represented him during his frequent absences from the capital, and even on solemn state occasions, when Peter wished to confound himself with the crowd. The governor kept in his palace a great bear, dressed as though he performed the duties of steward and chamberlain ; when any one presented himself to speak to his excellency, he was first obliged to pay his respects to the bear, who, advancing with all the grace of which his species is susceptible, presented a large tumbler of brandy, strongly peppered, to the visitor : he was obliged to drink it to the last drop, otherwise the bear, very sensitive on this point of etiquette, would have hugged the unlucky citizen, and torn his clothes. Such was the type of Russian manners under Peter the Great.

the political and industrial relations of Russia with those different nations multiplied. If the Russians have always been unacquainted with that exquisite elegance in social habitudes, which can only be found under a temperate climate and among a free people, or at least a people impressed with a feeling of human dignity, and pleading for its rights, we may most assuredly say, that they have always been prompt to acquire, and even to exaggerate, our vices.

We do not believe that the history of any other people presents, in modern times, a more complete and more odious picture of public immorality and private degradation than that of the Russian people under the reign of the too-famous Catherine. Every nation copies its masters and nobles; and slavery is peculiarly imitative, because it is accustomed to deify the vices even of the power which oppresses and alarms it. Let any one judge the influence on national thought and morals which must have been produced by the spectacle of this dissolute court, in which Catherine II., realising the fables narrated of the queen of Achem, and subjecting love, feeling, the modesty of her sex, to imperious physical wants, devoted all her power to give to the world an unparalleled example of infamy; of this court, become the loathsome Amathontis of another unchaste Venus, where the post of *favourite* was the first post in the empire, and in which all priests, generals, great lords, or humble plebeians, even princes, future heirs to the throne, were compelled to prostrate themselves before the contemptible idol which owed to the lubricity of a woman its elevation and its authority! The little that is good and generous even in the pride of birth must have vanished from the mind on beholding, for example, a Zoritz, a young Servian escaped from the slave-gaol of Constantinople, and become the favourite lover through the influence of accident and Potemkin, domineer over the wishes of the sovereign of this immense and unfortunate empire. If, however, such excesses, admitting some returns of reason and modesty,

had only insulted public decency at intervals, something, though little indeed, might be said in their palliation ; but this grand infamy was long and permanent : no one can say that the office of favourite was ever vacant for twenty-four successive hours during thirty-five years ; a short absence, a trifling illness, in him who occupied it, sufficed for his being superseded.* It was, moreover, the office in which the august empress displayed the most caution and discernment ; and there is no example of the elevation of an *incapable* subject. When old age, whose inroads were long eluded, at length deprived Catherine of the power of pleasing and being beloved, and rendered the so-envied post of favourite a truly onerous office, then it was that the court of the Semiramis of the North offered to entire Europe portraitures unrivalled in all that the cynicism of power has displayed in the exaggerated and the odious. The abominations of a Tiberius, the debaucheries of a Heliogabulus, all the impure traditions of degenerate and degraded Rome, do not strike the imagination with more astonishment. Towards the close of her life, Catherine became so corpulent as to be almost shapeless ; her countenance assumed a livid and hideous redness. Her legs always swollen, and frequently running with sores, formed one connected mass with the beautiful foot and ankle once so admired. A vain idol degraded by time, she was afflicted, even crushed by odious infirmities. Her courtiers had constructed in their houses inclined planes, which were softly carpeted, that she might the more easily ascend the apartments. In this state of prostrated infirmity, richly dressed and crowned with diamonds, but casting round passionless smiles, and, in spite of perfumes, exhaling the odour of the grave, the celestial autocratrice still invited the loves to her boudoir ; her desires yet retained their pristine energy ; and this perverse woman, who had so much to fear and so little to hope for in another world, clung with grasping tenacity to mundane pleasures. Age seemed to infuriate her passions ; at

* Mémoires Secrets.

sixty-five years of age she was seen suddenly to revive the orgies and the lupercalia she had formerly celebrated with the brothers Orloff. Plato Zouboff was then the prime favourite; Valerian, his brother, endowed with an athletic vigour, and Peter Soltikoff, were associated with him in his happiness and his *duty*; and it was with these three young men that Catherine, the aged Catherine, passed her days, whilst her armies fought the Turks, butchered the Swedes, and devastated unfortunate Poland, whilst her people raised the screaming cries of misery and famine, and were morally devoured by extortioners and tyrants.*

It will be felt that the details of her private life are not of a nature to be here recorded. We leave to the memoirs of her time the right of speaking of the *evenings of the Hermitage* and the mysteries of her *select society*. Our summary is already too much crowded with investigations of this more prominent portion of her history; moreover, there are facts which, if reported, might injure the morality we desire to promote. If, however, the reader, curiously indignant, wishes to know what were the functions of a Countess Branitscha, of a Madame Protasow, commonly called the *experimentalists* or *testimonialists*,—if he desires acknowledge of the preliminaries for the definitive installation of a favourite, he will have recourse to documents which we ourselves have consulted, and which, in truth, have become very scarce, because the court of Russia, or perhaps the solicitude of some great lords, have omitted no pains to destroy them.

Such, then, were the morals of the court; it remains for us to speak of those of the towns. We have said that, before Peter the Great, the physiognomy of his people was totally Asiatic, and that the laws and usages kept the women in seclusion. Peter I. broke open the doors of the gynæceum, and violently forced into society those women whose prior condition had differed slightly from that of slaves. But, counting from the death

* *Mémoires Secrets.*

of that monarch, the contingencies of an unregulated succession having called to the throne four or five women in succession, and Catherine having illustrated her epoch, the Russian nation accustomed itself to this *gyneocracy*, undoubtedly the worst, the most absurd of governments ; for, in spite of the old adage, *when women reign, men govern*, there is nothing more calamitous than to see power fall to a distaff. When women, reign the lovers tyrannise, and each pillages ; and, as the author of the *Mémoires Secrets* well remarks, it is difficult to cite six reigns more fertile in wars, revolutions, crimes, disorders, and calamities of every description. However, the women under Catherine, proud of seeing so much power in the hands of a person of their own sex, claimed in their own houses and in the society they frequented the pre-eminence they enjoyed at court.

The Princess Daschkoff, that Thomyris speaking French, as Voltaire said, already a stranger to her sex by her tastes, her intrigues, and her deeds, was still more so by her titles and functions as Director of the Academy of Sciences, and President of the Russian Academy. For a long time she entreated Catherine to name her colonel of her guards ; and the author of the *Memoirs* declares that she would have filled the post much better than many who exercised it. He affirms that several Russian generals, renowned abroad, were at that epoch governed by their wives, and trembled in their presence. Many wives of colonels, says he, carried on the details of the regiment, gave orders to the officers, employed them on particular services, dismissed them, and sometimes promoted them.*

* Madame Melin, *colonel* of the regiment of Tobolsk, commanded with a truly martial dignity, received reports at her toilette, and turned out the guard, whilst her accommodating husband was elsewhere occupied. The Swedes having attempted a surprise, she sallied from her tent in uniform to place herself at the head of a battalion, and march against the enemy. Several other women followed the army against the Turks. The seraglio of Potemkin was always composed of beautiful Amazons, who took pleasure in visiting fields of battle, and examining the vigorous nakedness

It must not be supposed that this inversion of the parts assigned by nature to man and woman was, in Russia, merely the result of caprice or of extravagance among some women of the court. The author of the *Memoirs*, who had long dwelt in that country, remarked still more *masculinity* in the habits and tastes of the women who lived in the country; and, with reason, he deduces this sad alteration in the primitive moral type from personal servitude. Widows and single women who had attained to their majority, he observes, on taking the management of their property, are compelled to enter into details little suited to their sex. To buy, to sell, to exchange slaves, to distribute to each his labour, to cause them to be stripped preparatory to being flogged,—are matters as repugnant to the sensibility as to the modesty of a woman, in countries where men are not degraded to the level of domestic animals, and treated with the same indifference; but these are duties which many Russian ladies are compelled to perform. Thus domestic manners, which every where else compensates the vices of public manners, become in Russia, on the contrary, the very source of corruption. The daily routine of a family in respectable circumstances furnishes young persons with an opportunity to satisfy and even anticipate their curiosity on all the mysteries of love, and deaden the senses and the organs even before their mature development.

Moral sensibility perishes in this apprenticeship; for a person must be utterly deprived of it to endure the sight of the punishments frequently inflicted on slaves. “I have been at tables,” says Colonel Masson, “where, for the slightest fault in a lacquey, the master has coolly ordered, and as a matter of course, that he

of the Turks, stretched on their backs, scimitar in hand, the countenance still menacing, like the Argante of Tasso before the soft Herminia. After the assault of Oczakow, piles of naked bodies, which had remained till they were congealed, were heaped up on the Liman, then frozen; and it was around these pyramids the Russian ladies rode in sledges to admire the beautiful Mussulman bodies stiffened by the frost.—*Mémoires Secrets*, t. ii.

should receive one hundred blows with a *batto*. He was immediately led into the court-yard, or merely into an ante-chamber; and all this took place in the presence of women and young girls, who, eating and laughing, heard the shrieks of the flaggellated sufferer. If the women in Russia are in general more wicked, more cruel, more barbarous than the men, it is because they are much more ignorant and superstitious. They do not travel, scarcely instruct themselves at all, and never work. Always surrounded by slaves to satisfy or anticipate their desires, the Russian ladies pass their time reclining under a canopy, or seated at a gaming-table. They rarely read, and still more rarely attend to any of the domestic arrangements of their household; and those whom a foreign and careful education has not humanised, are really yet barbarians. Almost all the women of the court, after the example of their august sovereign, had favourites; I do not say lovers, for that would imply something of sentiment. There was in this no more than a gross physical desire, and frequently merely the desire to follow the fashion. What completes the proof of the depravation, brutalisation of manners and tastes, during the reign of Catherine, is the discovery that was made, some years since, at Moscow, of an association known under the name of the 'Physical Club.' It surpassed in turpitude all that is related of the most impure institutions and most unchaste mysteries. Men and women assembled, on certain days, to abandon themselves promiscuously to the most infamous debaucheries. Husbands introduced their wives, brothers their sisters. The requisites in men were health and vigour; in women, youth and beauty. None were initiated till they had produced their proofs and undergone visits. Men received women, and women men. At the French Revolution the police had orders to ferret out and dissolve all mysterious societies; and then it was that they examined the Physical Club, whose members were obliged to reveal its secrets. As the members of both sexes belonged to the richest and most powerful families, and as nothing

political was involved in their assemblies, the authorities were contented with closing and interdicting this scandalous society."

To complete this picture, it remains to us to speak of the state of literature under Catherine, who, eager to adopt all means of occupying the attention of the world and aggrandising her reputation, seemed desirous of protecting it with effect. The truth, however, is, that she did less in its favour than Elizabeth, whose reign was illustrated by several very remarkable productions. Through ostentation, Catherine purchased some libraries and some collections of paintings. She pensioned sycophants, and flattered those celebrated men who could act as her trumpeters. She sent snuff-boxes and medals to foreigners, and allowed to die under her eyes, in profound misery, national savans, and artists of very distinguished merit. As to the personal literary talents of Catherine, they were very small, if we may judge by what are called her *productions*, notwithstanding the embellishment of some smatterers in literature whom she imported from France, and of whom Senac de Meilhan, a man in all respects below mediocrity, was the last. Independently of the Russian translation of the *Belisarius* of Marmontel, which she wrote during her journey to the Crimea, and her celebrated *Instructions for the Code*, she composed, for the instruction of her grandchildren, moral and allegorical tales, and a great number of dramatic pieces, which she caused to be acted and admired at the Hermitage. But of all her writings her letters to Voltaire, according to the author of the *Memoirs*, gave the most favourable opinion of her intellect. "They are much more interesting than those of the old philosophic courtier, who sold her watches and knitted stockings for her while hashing up, in a hundred ways, the same ideas and the same compliments, and a hundred times repeating his advice to expel the Turks from Europe, instead of advising her to give freedom to the Russians."*

* Since that epoch Russian literature, in spite of the publication of some estimable works, seems not yet to have taken any positive spring, through

Catherine had the most exalted opinion of herself, and thought herself endowed with the sublimest faculties, because she only knew what was dazzling in her empire and what was specious in its laws: from her the fatal results were concealed. Thus her reign having been to her only a long deception, a *long journey in the Crimea*, she finished her career by being astonished at her own genius, and by only speaking of her own person with the same admiration as her flatterers.

REIGN OF PAUL I.

1796. This is the reign of a moment, terminated by a sanguinary catastrophe; a sombre and wretched reign; in which the sceptre of Russia passed from a haughty and terrible woman, but whose hand knew how to decorate with some flowers the pride and the crimes of power, under the yoke and rule of a jealous master, who did not remove any of its odious traits from the spectre of tyranny. If Catherine had thought her end so near, it is probable that Paul would not have been her successor. Never was there less tenderness and confidence between a mother and her son. She constantly kept him in the most humiliating tutelage, in the most

want of a sufficient impulse. According to Dr. Lyall, although there exist in Russia many poets of great merit, much is required before they can enjoy a certain popularity. The sale of two or three hundred copies of a work in a population of more than forty millions of men is a very rare occurrence. The success of the History of Russia by Karamsin is the only remarkable exception to this common destiny of books, in a country where instruction is so little sought after; and it should also be noted that the total number of subscribers for the first edition was only 406. A second edition was published in 1817; and, a thing unheard of, the publisher ventured to print 1000 copies. Nevertheless, Dr. Lyall thinks that the taste for letters is rapidly spreading through this vast empire. In this respect Alexander, without doubt, did more than all his predecessors, by founding and encouraging schools. Some nobles have recently introduced the Lancasterian system of education, in spite of the ridiculous fears of their neighbours. The arts of printing, of engraving, and binding, have been carried to a high state of perfection.

absolute exclusion from public business; exhibiting nothing but the front of an imperious sovereign, in whom nature had not imprinted the slightest emotion of a maternal heart. She even hated him, and sought to direct the wishes and favour of the nation to the young Grand-Duke Alexander.

For a long time all these circumstances, and many others, had justified the opinion of those who regarded Paul as one of the children of Elizabeth and Razoumoffsky, or of some other favourite more obscure.* It must be said to the praise of Paul I., that feelings so vexatious to him on the part of the empress never altered his filial and religious respect for her; whether it was that his astonished genius trembled before that of another Agrippina, or that his soul was in fact capable of rising to that lofty virtue necessary to love those who hate us. On several occasions he even repulsed culpable insinuations, the object of which was to show him the road by which his mother had reached the throne, still more open and more practicable to himself. But when, at length, the fit of apoplexy which had carried off the empress had enfranchised Paul from a maternity so oppressive, his long griefs, and the bitter humiliations which he had drained to the dregs during thirty years, flowed from his surcharged heart as a torrent over every thing which had surrounded the brilliant throne of the defunct sovereign, —over every thing which she had accomplished or commenced; it was a complete overthrow,—a revolution which extended from internal administration to foreign relations, and even to the political geography of the empire. Faithful only to the despotic principles of Catherine, he imitated her in his hatred of the French Revolution.

The impartiality of history adds, therefore, to all the reproaches so justly merited by Catherine, that of having stifled in the soul of her son the germ of happier qualities through bad treatment. This presumptive heir of a great empire lived solitary, removed from

* The absolutely Tatar physiognomy of Paul the First authorises this conjecture, and strengthens all others that the singular fancy of Elizabeth, to which we alluded in speaking of that empress, warrants us in imagining.

the court, having no other confidant of his sufferings than the wife who shared them; and since, in fact, we have resolved to speak out unreservedly and tell all, the future possessors of so much power frequently wanted necessities, while the lovers of the mother revelled in all the prodigalities and all the conceivable licentiousness afforded by the treasures of the state. This is not all: vile agents were the spies of their sorrows; and they were even deprived of the caresses of their children.* Paul at least loved his own; and his first care on ascending the throne was to give them proof of his paternal confidence by conferring on each the command of a regiment of guards.

Paul suspended the levy of 100,000 men which Catherine had ordered shortly before her death, with which to make war against France; not that he had other principles than her own in reference to the French Revolution, but in order to ward off the scourge of bankruptcy, which the excessive depreciation of paper currency, created by his mother to meet the wants of the state, rendered imminent. He also broke off a treaty of subsidies which was negotiating with England. (1798.) However, the influence of that power was not slow in again prevailing and manifesting its influence at St. Petersburg. Through commerce, the English had for a long time drained the treasures of Russia; and it was with its gold that she bought its blood. They drew Paul I. into that second coalition which united against France the North and the South, barbarism and civilisation, and to which the adhesion of the king of Prussia was alone wanting, in spite of the solicitations of the cabinet of St. Petersburg and the diplomatic dexterity of the Prince Repnin.

The army which had assembled in Galicia by the orders of Catherine, and at the head of which was the old Suwarrow, burning to march against the French, whom his ridiculous fanaticism regarded as a vile horde of brigands, received orders to enter on the

* The grand-duchess went to Tzarskoe-Zelo to be confined, and the children remained with the empress.

campaign, and proceed by short stages into Italy. This army, 50,000 strong, advanced through the ice of winter, preceded by a singular and marvellous renown, to combat unknown enemies. The imaginations of the French do not seem to have been sufficiently defended by national intrepidity against the imposing echo of this distant sound, which appeared to announce a race of giants.

Suwarrow united himself, near to Verona, with the Austrian army commanded by Kray, who, through the obstinate unskilfulness of Scherer, for once obtained the glory of conquering the French. The Austro-Russian army, 80,000 strong, united at Cassano, and defeated 30,000 French under the orders of Moreau : the Directory had intrusted the remnant of the army of Scherer to that able captain, whose defeat was only the inevitable consequence of the faults and misfortunes of his predecessor. The French lost 7000 to 8000 men, and a considerable train of artillery. But at Bassagnano the Russian general Rosembourg paid dearly for this victory, because the French, under the orders of General Garreau, fought him with more equal forces. The shock was obstinate and sanguinary : a castle in the middle of the battle-field was carried and retaken several times by both parties ; but the Russian battalion, broken through and 'disconcerted by the superiority of the French fire and the vivacity of their charge, at length fled, and were pursued at the point of the bayonet to the bank of the river, into which great numbers precipitated themselves and perished. Suwarrow, in these two engagements, learned to esteem, or at least to respect, French valour.* After this advantage, Suwarrow marched suddenly on Turin; and Moreau made vain attempts to stop him, having only a few thousand soldiers under his command. His prudence, however, retained him in the entrenched positions he occupied, till Macdonald entered Lombardy at the head of 35,000 men. The first combats of this army were victorious,

* We borrow these details from the third volume of the *Mémoires Secrets*, where Colonel Masson has enlarged on this memorable campaign, with all the complacency of a professional man and a French patriot.

which seemed to justify the boldness of attacking the enemy before effecting a junction with Moreau. Macdonald made himself master of Modena, Parma, Placentia, and all the surrounding territory. These successes, obtained against divisional corps of the allies, forced the grand Austro-Russian army to return by forced marches to the foot of the mountains on the banks of the Trebbia.

Our plan does not allow us to enter into the strategical details of the battle of Trebbia, one of the most memorable which illustrated the republican wars of France. Suffice it to say, that this sanguinary battle, in which the French could not conquer, but were not conquered, having continued through a whole day with incredible slaughter, was renewed on the morrow ; the Russians then displayed before the French that invincible obstinacy, that discipline, and that resignation to death, which has made them so often triumph.

Closing their ranks as often as they were opened by shot, they twice drove the French beyond the river, who twice re-crossed it. But the latter, neither by the rapidity of their movements nor the superiority of their fire, nor by the skill with which they avoided the charge, nor by the brilliant valour of their leaders and the intrepidity of the soldiers, could triumph over Russian impassibility, that dogged obstinacy against which Prussian discipline and the tactics of the Great Frederick had so often succumbed. After this victory, Suwarrow circulated proclamations through the country, a strange medley of ridiculous quackery and mystified verbiage. It was in the name of the faith and orthodox doctrine that this schismatic barbarian invited the Tuscans and Ligurians to unite with him for the extermination of the French unbelievers. However, he was only too well served in his views. The French experienced all the misfortunes which follow defeat ; and whilst Moreau retreated and Macdonald was repulsed, Lombardy, Tuscany, and Piedmont vied with each other in rousing bands of insurgents and brigands against the French warriors. If Suwarrow, warmly profiting by his advantages, as it was in his nature to do, had pursued the French, whose absolute want of all resources rendered their

retreat very painful, it is more than probable that in this campaign he would have completed the conquest of Italy, and even penetrated into the south of France. He preferred investing the strong places of Piedmont. The French made a last effort to save those which still held out, and then it was that Joubert advanced beyond Novi with 20,000 men.

Full of all the confidence of youth, Joubert, contrary to the advice of all the other generals, desired to assault the imposing mass of the united forces of the old Suwarrow and the Austrian Kray. "He is a stripling," said the veteran general, speaking of Joubert; "he is coming to school: let us give him a lesson." For the misfortune of the French arms, fortune justified this fanfaronade: Joubert was beaten, and fell, struck by a deadly bullet, at the moment when, hurried away by his impetuous valour, he rushed forward at the head of a battalion, exclaiming, "Forward, grenadiers!" However, the French avenged the death of their general. After having been driven back, hemmed in against the mountains and shut up in their positions, they marvellously profited by their light artillery to make a horrible carnage of the Russians.

Suwarrow had led forty thousand men into Italy. Shortly afterwards, when he collected the remnant of that body to cross St. Gothard and join Korsakoff, he only mustered about twelve thousand fit to follow him into Switzerland. Thus thirty thousand men, who had marched from the distant and unpeopled banks of the Volga to fatten the plains of Lombardy, paid for the surname of "Italicus," with which the ferocious old man was decorated by his master. It was the last of his victories; but he had seen French blood flow, and his wishes, as well as his renown, were equally crowned. Paul I., no less intoxicated with joy, ordered, when conferring on him the title of prince, that henceforward Suwarrow was to be accounted the greatest of ancient or modern generals.

Paul I. was determined by these successes, so dearly pur-

chased, to redouble his efforts against France. "We have resolved," said he in his manifesto, "we and our allies, to destroy the impious government which exists in France." In fact, at the voice of this autocrat, four armies advanced from the confines of Asia, by different roads, to subjugate France, and crush under its ruins the republican government. This powerful effort of an empire, alone ten times greater than the whole of France, was, however, only the auxiliary aid which was to support this second coalition. Had it proved more fortunate than the first, the most frightful revolution would have ensued. Russia would have become the arbiter of the world; and Paul, the restorer of despotism and barbarism, would have enchained nations to the glebe of feudalism, and to the altar of superstition. The children of republican France averted, by their victories, that dreadful catastrophe. Two of the Russian armies crossed Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, and the south of Germany, to penetrate simultaneously into France by the eastward and the southward; the two others, embarked on formidable fleets on the opposite seas which embrace Europe, were to reconquer the isles of Greece, Naples, Malta, and Holland. The army which marched to the Rhine was composed of forty thousand men, the flower of the Russian troops; it moreover contained those famous battalions which Potemkin had formed, and which had distinguished themselves in the sanguinary assaults of Oczakow and Ismail. The rest were taken from the army which had recently ravaged the north of Persia.

Thus the latter, who had started from the mouths of the Neva and Dwina two years before to repair to the margin of the Araxes, returned from thence to march to the banks of the Rhine. That army, commanded by Korsakoff (who must not be confounded with a former lover of Catherine of the same name), had received orders to act in concert with the Archduke Charles in the general plan of the campaign. At the moment when it arrived in Germany, Jourdan had been beaten at

Ostrach by the Austrians; and Massena himself, retreating before the victorious archduke, was compelled to cross the Limmat. The Austrians, masters of Zurich, were already in the heart of Switzerland, divided in their favour. The Russians having joined the Austrian prince (1799), wished immediately to occupy the advanced posts, and spoke of giving battle. The archduke, who had experienced the valour of the French and the talents of Massena, justly shocked at the presumptuous levity with which the Russian general spoke of such adversaries, immediately left the passage free to him, and marched to the relief of Philipsbourg, menaced on another side by the French. Massena, having under him Oudinot and Soult, commanded an army whose front extended from the neighbourhood of Bâle to the foot of Mount St. Gothard. But as General Hotze, with the Swiss, who were ranged on the side of the allies, held in check all the right wing of the army, the number of French who took part in the action was not equal to that of the Russians, particularly in the centre, where the latter had concentrated all their troops, and where the battle was fiercest.

We must read in works especially written on the history of the revolutionary wars, the details of the memorable battle of Zurich, where Massena saved France, as Villars had done at Denain. The republicans descended from the heights surrounding Zurich into the basin of that town to attack the Russians, who, themselves eager for combat, only waited for the orders of Suwarrow. The French crossed the Limmat, having in front the Russian battalions, drawn up immovable as ramparts on the opposite bank. The passage was so rapid, and the attack so impetuous, that the assailants overthrew and destroyed the first lines of the enemy. The Russians rallied behind their tents, exhausting their cartridge-boxes, and, refusing to surrender, died in line. The right wing of the Russians, on the side of Baden, being also broken and its batteries carried, Korsakoff, by a manœuvre familiar to Russian tacticians, formed in the plain a

hollow square of about fifteen thousand men ; but the light artillery attacked and soon crushed in ruins this moving bastion, bristling with powerless bayonets.

Entire ranks fell in front, entire files were overthrown on the flanks. The Russians trampled under foot their dying companions, to close in and maintain themselves in order, to recharge by platoons and divisions, to fight with the same regularity with which they performed their exercise ; and they were struck down and perished on the ground on which they stood. When the destructive fire of the French had, at various times, thinned and mutilated this mass of men, the republican generals, ordering a general attack, rushed forward to the charge, and the cavalry completed the rout and dispersion of the enemy. Thus the battle was decisive and the victory complete. The conquerors entered Zurich, pursuing the Russians, who had quitted it to range themselves on the plain, there to fight. Night suspended the carnage. However, the Russians rallied again on the following morning, and seconded by some fresh troops, attempted to snatch victory from their enemies ; and, in fact, they made it again doubtful : but finally, towards the middle of the day, they were beaten in detail, and cut in pieces by small platoons. Their fanatic fury rejected quarter ; and none surrendered unless wounded, disarmed, or hurled to the ground. More than one was seen, mortally wounded, to rise up, before breathing his last, to fire a last shot at the victors who bounded over the plain. Each soldier, on falling, seized the image of his patron saint, suspended to his neck, to kiss it, and uttered some prayers. It was a singular spectacle to the republican soldiers, after the battle, to see these reliques on the breast or in the hand of their adversaries, whose attitude attested that their last sentiment had been one of devotion.

Suwarrow, with his army of Italy, crossed St. Gothard, and descended from it as a devastating torrent. His rapid march was admired by the French generals. The division of Lecourbe, which, after the glorious campaign in the Engadine, had been

forced to retire to the French side of Mount St. Gothard, occupied the passes to Italy and the valley of the Rhine, from the source of that river to the heights of Glaris: it quickly crossed the Reuss, and halted at the foot of Mount Rigi. Suwarrow, master of three little cantons, already menaced the right of the French army, when he heard of the defeat of Korsakoff before Zurich. At this intelligence the old man gave way to transports of fury and indignation. His name and his threats reanimated the dispirited remnant of the vanquished army, which, reinforced by the corps of Condé, arrived at Constance, and dared, suspending its retreat, to hazard a new engagement at Dissenhofen. A corps of Russian cavalry charged in the plain two demi-brigades of infantry, commanded by the brave General Lorge, and unsupported by any horse. Three times this corps of about 3000 men repeated its furious charge; though always broken, it rallied under a terrible fire of musketry, which destroyed it. This sanguinary and memorable combat was the last between the Russians and the French. Massena, victorious at Zurich, on learning the arrival of Suwarrow, marched to meet him, and arrested his course. Despairing with his 12,000 men to pass through the body of a victorious army, to reach Korsakoff, a second time put to flight, Suwarrow thought of retreating himself while it was yet time. Massena vainly manœuvred to decoy him from the defiles, in the hope of making him prisoner,—him, the army he commanded, and the young Grand Duke Constantine, who accompanied him.

We may judge of the situation of this new Marius, of him who had hitherto prohibited the fires of retreat, saying that an army under his orders should never need this humiliating manœuvre. But the French generals confess that this retreat was worthy of his march, admirable as that was. Suwarrow retired before his enemy as an old lion, menacing and terrible, when the hunters press on him too closely. He abandoned some baggage, some artillery, his sick and wounded; but General

Mortier, ordered to pursue him to Muttenthal, could only cut off two or three battalions of grenadiers, who devoted themselves to save the rest of the army. Suwarrow was, therefore, not personally conquered. No general can boast of having beaten him ; and few, like him, have carried that glory to the tomb, after having, as he did, for forty years, waged war against barbarians, and nations the most powerful through their civilisation. However, Suwarrow exhibited himself in Switzerland, as he had done in Italy, devout, superstitious, hypocritical ; he visited the curates, besought their benediction, declared that he came in the name of God and the emperors, of the saints of the Eternal, to re-establish holy religion, and exterminate the impious. He harangued all he met ; burlesque buffoon ! he wished to appear popular. These miserable mummeries did not long deceive the inhabitants : indiscipline and licentiousness were the order of the day in the army of Suwarrow ; for such were the means he employed to attach the soldiery. Those under his immediate command were distinguished by excesses and pillages ; and the degenerate children of Tell, who had received these men of the north with ardour, felt the difference between the Cossacks and the French soldier—between the mercenaries of despotism, and the defenders of human liberty. Thus also was dissipated, by the immortal valour of the republican warriors, the illusion which distance and a vague renown had created in favour of the Russian armies. When the prisoners taken in these different battles entered France, instead of seeing giants of ferocious aspect, as they expected, the inhabitants of the French towns were touched by compassion, and surprised in observing in the Russians men who, in common with other people of Europe, had a moral and physical analogy with themselves ; but the astonishment of these poor captives was much greater in seeing themselves the object of a humane attention and vigilant care, unknown among themselves even for their sick and wounded.

When news of these multiplied disasters reached St. Peters-

burg, anger, indignation, and resentment rioted in the soul of Paul I. Like another Philip, he thought he had fitted out an *Invincible Armada*; and, combating for servitude and superstition, he was persuaded that heaven was responsible for his success. But he did not support the blows of fortune with the majestic coolness of the Spanish monarch. His pride humbled, the glory of his reign compromised, he carried his rage and fury to the verge of madness. He broke and disgraced in mass all the officers who were absent from the army, without inquiring whether they were dead or living, killed or prisoners. As to the soldiers, he abandoned them as conquered booty; and did not deign even to adopt any measures for their exchange, although his allies could have spared him the humiliation of claiming them from France. It is true that he had no French prisoners for that exchange; but he had a right on those in the hands of his allies, Austrians, Neapolitans, and English. However, disposed by the unanimous reports of his generals, and by the testimony of the Grand Duke Constantine, to impute his reverses to the perfidy or cowardice of his allies, Paul loaded with reproaches and affronts the ministers of those different powers, indulged in the most bitter sarcasms against the coalition, and finally abandoned this grand quarrel of kings with as little ceremony as he had embraced it.

This catastrophe of the Russian armies—the disgrace of so many distinguished officers—the death or captivity of others—the slur which seemed to be thrown on Russia, accustomed for a long period only to record victory in her military annals,—greatly augmented the discontents of this turbulent and capricious reign, which menaced the empire, exhausted of men and money, with approaching ruin. We have said, that on the commencement of his career, Paul I. seemed guided in his reforms solely through hatred of his mother and of the past. Soon led astray by this odious feeling, he multiplied false steps, contradictions, and errors, which afterwards furnished a pretext to his enemies to accuse him of folly, and justify the necessity of his abdication.

Naturally humane and just, he committed acts which bore the stamp of refined cruelty; and jealous to excess of the conservation of his rights, for the enjoyment of which he had long waited, he exercised, even in the minutest details, a restless and insupportable despotism. Finally, the nobility, whom he had exasperated by menacing their privileges, and his tyrannical independence, too victoriously balanced the love which the people bore him. He had, moreover, awakened a host of hostile reminiscences—fears, remorse, and hatred—by moving the ashes of Peter III., whom he believed to be his father, although rejected by him from his cradle; and at the funereal pomp which accompanied the translation of the body of that unfortunate prince to the citadel, he compelled many of the assassins to follow the procession, a revenge as admirable as it was terrible. The conduct of Paul I. to the powers formerly his allies completed the alienation of his nobles. Soon, separated from Europe, from his subjects, and his family, abandoned to abject attachments in the maturity of age, though his youth had been moral and austere, he only escaped hatred by falling into contempt.

In the mean time a new revolution had been effected in France; and the astonishing man whom the 18th Brumaire had placed alone on the tottering throne of the Pentarchs,* conceived the hope of detaching the emperor of Russia entirely from the cause of the allies. After the victory of Marengo, and that glorious campaign, called the *Campaign of thirty days*, which delivered Italy to France, astonished and crushed Austria, the contempt of Paul for this latter power, and his esteem for the French nation, manifested themselves in his actions and language. Enamoured of military glory, he no longer dissembled his admiration for the hero of Marengo, whose bust, placed in the palace of the Hermitage, was saluted by him with the name of the *great man*. English policy, already alarmed by these indications, was profoundly irritated, when Paul, having concluded a treaty (1800) of armed neutrality with Sweden, proclaimed this grand principle

* This term refers to the French Directory, composed of five members. J.D.

of maritime liberty, that a *neutral flag covers the cargo*. It was a stipulation calling in question the supremacy so long arrogated by the British flag on the seas. Finally, Paul, who always added actions to words, immediately put a general embargo on all English vessels which he found in his ports, and detained the crews. Denmark and Prussia adhered to this convention; and as at the same instant the peace of Luneville was concluded between France (1801), the emperor of Austria, and the Germanic body, England saw all her ancient continental influence dissipated before the victorious ascendancy of the fortune of Napoleon. Then the English ministry, with Pitt at its head, resigned; so impossible did it appear to him to conciliate the difficulties which arose with his ancient maxims, all comprised in those two words, *Delenda Carthago*. Buonaparte having sent back the Russian prisoners without ransom, newly clothed and equipped, a generosity so rare entirely won over Paul to France. Amicable relations were renewed between the two powers; and the cabinet of St. James's soon saw its fears confirmed by armaments which were forming in the most eastern part of the empire, on a vast plan of attack directed against the English power in India. Paul also prepared to cross Persia with a powerful army. From that moment the murder of that prince was resolved upon. The principal members of this conspiracy were, at first, the three Zouboffs, General Beningson, Tatchwill, General Ouvaroff, Colonel Tatarinoff, Prince Werinskoi; and lastly, Count Pahlen, who perhaps merited the sad honour of being named the first, since he was the prime mover of this infamous machination. His post of military governor of St. Petersburg subjected him more immediately than any other person to the scrutinising despotism of the monarch, and exposed him to suspicions which every day rendered his authority and his life more doubtful. To preserve both, he resolved on giving himself a new master, whatever obstacles might oppose his determination. It is said, and it is almost certain, that the two grand-dukes were menaced with the loss of their liberty, and perhaps

with all the horrors of the fate of Alexis Petrovitz, when the plot was completed. It is also said that Pahlen had received an order to arrest them ; that at the sight of that order Alexander was mute with astonishment ; and that his silence was regarded as a tacit consent to the design, which hitherto he had repulsed, of forcing his father to abdicate. Different secret hints and whispered rumours had increased the distrust of Paul, and carried terror into his soul. A crowd of those frivolous and fugitive circumstances which always form part of great events, and which sometimes appear to be accumulated by an irresistible fatality, prevented him from taking an advantage of them. But, haunted by sinister visions even in his sleep, the unfortunate monarch dreamed of his tomb and of his butchers. In this cruel anxiety, having a presentiment of the perfidy of Pahlen, he had summoned to his presence Aracktkhieff, formerly governor of St. Petersburg, and who was then at a short distance from the capital : " Come," wrote he ; " I confide to your fidelity my throne and my life." Leidner was also called upon to command the fortress : but the arrival of these two chiefs, generally detested, disquieted the minds of men, and more strongly indisposed them towards the emperor, whose temper, soured by frightful suspicions and continual fears, plunged him day by day more deeply in the sombre agitations of tyranny.

At length the fatal day arrived. On the 23d of March, the emperor, who then projected a journey to Moscow, was tranquilly occupied with preparing for his departure, and appeared in public with an unaccustomed serenity ; his mind seemed disengaged from all suspicion and all inquietude. At eleven o'clock at night, twenty conspirators presented themselves before one of the gates of the palace of St. Michael. It was closed against them. They produced an order from the emperor himself : the soldier on sentry at the gate, too simple and too generous-minded to imagine that he saw assassins under brilliant clothes and those decorations which attested rank and dignity, allowed them to enter. They

silently ascended into the apartments of the emperor. Argamakoff, his aide-de-camp, presented himself alone before the Cossack hussar who guarded the ante-chamber. The soldier stopped him, saying, "The emperor sleeps." "The town is on fire," replied Argamakoff; "I must awaken him;" and at these words he pushed forward. The Cossack, seeing others advance, shouted "Treason!" and fell pierced with wounds. Surprised in his sleep, the emperor leapt from his bed, wished to flee, but missed the secret passage he sought; seizing a sword, he turned courageously to the conspirators. "What is your design?" he demanded of Zouboff, who stood before him; "what do those wish who accompany you?" "That you descend from the throne," replied the latter; then he read the act of deposition. "What, Plato!" exclaimed the emperor; "you whom I have loaded with my bounties!" "You are no longer our master," answered Zouboff; "the nation has given you a successor in Alexander." The indignant prince raised his sword, and the conspirators, astonished at his courage, paused. Beningson shuddered, and exclaimed, "If you hesitate, you are lost." Reanimated by his voice, emboldened by the example of Valerian Zouboff, who struck the first blow at his sovereign, all simultaneously rushed on him and crushed him. He fell defenceless, imploring their mercy; it was in vain; they struck him again and again, and heaped on him opprobrium and outrage. They dragged him along the floor, mutilated his body; night, veiling in its darkness a part of these horrors, seemed to infuriate their ferocity. Finally, to complete the murder of their victim, whose piercing cries of agony resounded through the palace, one of them twisted his scarf round his neck; then he expired.

END OF VOL. I.

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ADRIANOPLE.

THE

History of Russia.



ALEXANDER COLUMN AND WINTER PALACE, ST. PETERSBURG

BY JONATHAN DUNCAN, B.A.



LONDON: MILFORD HOUSE.

HISTORY OF RUSSIA

FROM THE

FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE BY ROURICK

TO THE

CLOSE OF THE HUNGARIAN WAR.

BY

ALPHONSE RABBE AND JONATHAN DUNCAN, B.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE HISTORY OF RUSSIA.

SEVENTH EPOCH.

INTERVENTION AND PREPONDERANCE OF RUSSIA IN THE DIFFERENT CONTINENTAL COALITIONS AGAINST FRANCE, FROM 1800 TO 1815.

WE can only sketch the outlines of the vast picture which this last epoch presents. The history of Russia becomes that of the European world. Springing beyond her natural limits, this power now interferes with all the quarrels of the continent, and soon becomes the head of that formidable monarchical opposition excited by the jealousy of the old dynasties against the dazzling glory of a too-fortunate soldier. A gigantic struggle, suspended at intervals by truces falsely termed treaties, exhausts nations, places in jeopardy the existence of several thrones, and swallows up many principalities. When it is terminated, the world beholds with grief Russia advancing foremost on the smoking soil of Europe, uprearing her domineering head, and fearless of any possible rivalry except from England. In fact, Great Britain always remains strong in her geographical position and her wealth, but especially in the patriotic energy of her government. In the complete overthrow of that wise balance of European power founded by the famous treaty of Westphalia, the influence acquired by France, disputed by England, rapidly escaped from both to pass into the hands of Russia. Thus it was not for the profit of one of those powers which had concurred in forming it, that this

equilibrium was destroyed,—this so-much-vaunted edifice of modern policy, and on the basis of which Europe had reposed during 150 years; it was for the benefit of a power in favour of whom nothing was stipulated, either at Münster, or Nimeguen, or at Aix-la-Chapelle, and whose name even had not figured in any of those treaties. It was, in fact, for the profit of Russia, more unknown to our ancestors than the deserts of America, and which, recently enfranchised from the Tatars, still bears in the features of its savage majesty the impression of its chains. Here is one of those unexpected changes on the theatre of the political world, which make manifest the fragility and the slight duration of human combinations. What would Richelieu and Louis the Fourteenth say, could they at this moment return to the world? However, the actual supremacy of Russia is easily accounted for by the nature of the physical constitution of the empire. “Russia,” observes a writer full of sense, “was already, in 1789, a preponderating power. She possessed in her manners, in her institutions, and even in the barbarism of her people, resources unknown to more civilised nations. If, on the one hand, the immensity of her territory prevents her putting in movement a force as considerable as she has done at an extraordinary crisis, without essentially injuring her population, on the other hand, it ensures her existence against the most unfavourable chances. She is almost always the mistress to carry on war as she pleases. Conquered, she leads her imprudent conqueror into her deserts. With nobles who know how to make sacrifices, with peasants who have scarcely any thing to lose, and whom an army drives before them as a flock of sheep, she is sure to escape foreign domination; she has the choice of means and arms; she can destroy her enemies without fighting them. Victorious, she pursues them with indefatigable ardour; she promptly repairs her losses, she re-appears more rich and more powerful, and extends still further in advance the barriers of her empire.” The acquisitions she had made in Persia, Prussia, Austria, and Sweden, in the last wars, had raised

her total population to upwards of 40,000,000 of inhabitants ; the cession of the duchy of Warsaw, except that part which had been detached to form the grand-duchy of Posen, must have added at least 3,200,000 individuals. Two centuries ago, when the Muscovite boyars invited the son of Sigismund to Moscow, the danger of uniting on the same head the crowns of Russia and Poland was scarcely perceived. A century later, it would have roused all the powers, and in our days it can no longer be prevented ; so movable, so variable, so subject to modification, at the caprice of fortune, are the bases of this European equilibrium.

1801. The first effects of the death of Paul were, the dissolution of the northern confederacy against England, and the revival of all the influence of that last power in the cabinet of St. Petersburg. The treaty of peace which the First Consul then determined to conclude with England, was also a consequence of that event. Nearly all these arrangements had been foreseen by the contrivers of the crime which so prematurely placed Alexander on the throne ; and the British fleet only passed the Sound at the moment when Paul fell under the swords of the assassins. A treaty of peace with Russia was, however, the necessary consequence of that which had just been concluded with England. Before that there had only existed between the two powers a simple cessation of hostilities in fact, though without any written convention. (1803.) War being renewed in 1803 between France and England, in contempt of the treaty of Amiens, which, however, had assured to France nearly all that the victorious armies of the Republic had conquered, Russia offered its mediation to the two powers (August 1803) ; but England would not hear of peace till the French had evacuated Hanover. Moreover, the constantly increasing ambition of Napoleon rendered it impossible ; and the detestable crime of which the Duke d'Enghien was the victim, drew down on him the indignation of all Europe. England, idly menaced with an invasion, laboured more effectually than her enemy, by drawing Russia into her plans by the treaty

of Petersburg. (April 1805.) Austria, attacked at once in her dominion and her pride, was not slow in acceding to that treaty. (August 1805.) She felt the pressure of a victorious and terrible neighbour from the sources of the Mein to the mouths of the Po ; and to increase her regrets, Italy, at this moment, again escaped from her ; of her federative supremacy of Germany nothing remained but the empty title of emperor of the hereditary states of the house of Austria alone.

The Archduke Ferdinand, General Mack, and the Archduke John opened the campaign with ninety thousand men, occupying at once Bavaria, the gorges of the Tyrol, and the banks of the Adige. Prussia was not less prompt to take up arms ; and the two sovereigns, Alexander and Frederick William, solemnised their treaty of Potsdam by an oath on the tomb of the great Frederick. (October 1805.) At the same time, England allied herself with Sweden. All the north of Europe combined against the ambition of Napoleon, who always threw his gauntlet into the balance where the fate of the conquered was weighed. However, fortune continued her favours to that extraordinary man. This campaign commenced with the capitulation of Ulm, which dishonoured General Mack, and finished by the memorable battle of Austerlitz. The Russian army which took part in that battle was commanded by General Kutusof, and mustered seventy thousand men ; the Austrians had twenty-five thousand, and the French eighty thousand. The hesitations of the old Russian general opportunely served Napoleon, by giving him time to concentrate his scattered forces, and fall back upon the ground which he had marked out as the field of battle. Lannes, Suchet, Soult, Bernadotte (who had not yet *taken the degree* of royalty), Murat, Davoust, Oudinot, Junot,—all the names which constitute the honour and the pride of French military annals, resound in the narratives of that memorable day. Thirty thousand Russian warriors buried under the ice of a lake which broke beneath their feet, fifteen of their generals taken or slain on the field of battle,

ought to engrave on their memory the name of Austerlitz. (December 1805.) They lost, besides, their baggage and their artillery, composed of more than one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon.* Austria, who had provoked the war, was the first to solicit peace. Sovereign of a nation whose annals do not abound in victories, and much more accustomed to humiliation than homage, Francis II. did not fear to come to the bivouac of Napoleon humbly to pray for peace. An armistice was granted ; and the first condition was, that the Russians should evacuate the Austrian territory, and retire beyond the Krapack mountains. The minister Haugwitz, starting from Berlin to repair to the head-quarters of the allies, on learning the fate of their arms, went to Napoleon, and congratulated him on his victory. “ This,” said the conqueror of Austerlitz, “ is a compliment whose superscription has been changed by fortune.” Such was the result of the third coalition. At the end of that year (26th Dec. 1805), a new peace was signed between France and Austria, called the treaty of Presburg, which, despoiling the imperial house, carved out of its dominions two kingdoms ; one for the elector of Bavaria, another for the Duke of Wurtemberg. (20th July, 1806.) Russia also feigned a desire for peace. At the commencement of the following year she opened negotiations ; signed, through her ambassador, a treaty at Paris ; then refused, under idle pretexts, to ratify it, because she had only wished to gain time to re-organise her forces and avenge the disgrace of Austerlitz.

October 1806. A fourth coalition was formed under the mask of this short truce. Prussia, abjuring a neutrality which she could not persuade the world was sincere, put two hundred and fifty thousand men on foot by an immense and national effort.

* Austerlitz, as the name of a victory, is perhaps that which sounded most agreeably in the ear of Napoleon. It was the “ sun of Austerlitz” he invoked on days of battle. When the celebrated Gerard had completed the magnificent picture which celebrates that battle, the emperor left the saloon enchanted, and at the Tuileries said to one of his ministers, “ Go, sir, go to the Louvre, and see how we were at Austerlitz.”

(October 14th.) The victory of Jena falsified most disastrously the hopes and the enthusiasm of the Prussian nation. Of all the battles which, since 1792, have shed lustre on the French arms, none left less honour to the vanquished, so complete was their rout, so rapid their flight. Ten days afterwards the conquerors entered Berlin. However, the Emperor Alexander hastened to the succour of his unfortunate ally. The French and Russians met on the banks of the Vistula; and the former, after having occupied Thorn, were successively victorious at Czarnowo, Mohrun-gen, Pultusk, and Golymin. (8th Jan. 1807.) The important battle of Eylau distinguished the opening of the campaign at the commencement of the following year. The Russian army in Poland, which, before that affair, was still one hundred and sixty thousand strong, sustained an immense loss; but it must be confessed, in spite of the bulletins of the time, that the French suffered as severely. (February and June 1807.) The capture of Dantzic and the victory of Friedland, much more decisive than that of Eylau, led, at the end of a few days, to an interview between the two emperors on the Niemen, and then to the peace of Tilsit.

7th July, 1807. The treaty of Tilsit savoured less of the difference of position which victory had established between the two monarchs, than of Napoleon's desire to draw Russia into his continental system—a grand European combination, which might have destroyed England, could it have been carried into execution. To this favourite plan of his policy Napoleon sacrificed the accomplishment of a project which was at once more easy, more useful, and more glorious,—to wit, the re-establishment of Poland. He only changed the destination of a part of that kingdom, already so scandalously dismembered; and all that was taken from Prussia served to augment the dominions of the king of Saxony, under the name of the grand duchy of Warsaw. Dantzic recovered its ancient independence, but not all its territory. Finally, Russia, whose intervention saved the king of Prussia a part of his

dominions, promised to make common cause with France, and, in concert with her, summon Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal to adopt their system, by closing their ports against the English. But one of the clauses stipulated for the re-establishment of the Dukes of Saxe-Coburg, Mecklenburg, and Oldenburg in their respective possessions. In return for all these concessions, to which victory added so much grace, Napoleon, always too much occupied with the interests of his *dynasty*, that is to say, of his family, had exacted the formal recognition of his three brothers, Joseph, Louis, and Jerome, as kings of Naples, Holland, and Westphalia.

The English redoubled their activity to preserve some influence in the north. It was by the suggestions of the cabinet of St. James's that the young king of Sweden, in violation of an armistice concluded with Brune at the moment when the negotiations at Tilsit had been opened, renewed the war single-handed : in fact, he counted upon the assistance of the English ; but their friendship was so tardy, that General Brune had time to seize on Stralsund, the capital of Swedish Pomerania (20th August, 1807), a strong place, and doubly important by its position and vast arsenals. This loss, so considerable for Sweden, was soon followed by the capitulation of the isle of Rugen, and the evacuation of all Pomerania by the troops of the king of Sweden. The English, allowing full scope to the successes of Brune, did not even present themselves for a moment to arrest the misfortunes of their most faithful ally ; but they attacked Copenhagen, because they could not prevail on the king of Denmark to follow the perilous and sad example of his neighbour. After a bombardment of three days (September 7, 1807), that capital was set on fire, and the Danish fleet fell into the power of the English. An aggression so savage and perfidious did more in favour of the continental system of Napoleon than all his victories and solicitations. The king of Denmark sequestered in his dominions all British property, interdicted all intercourse between his subjects and England under the most severe penalties, and concluded with France a treaty of alliance, at the same time

that Russia, manifesting its indignation at the burning of Copenhagen (October 20), renewed the principles of the armed neutrality.

This declaration of the Emperor Alexander against England, in attesting the good faith which had influenced his engagements on the Niemen, apparently promised a long duration to the treaty of Tilsit. That sovereign annulled all former conventions between Russia and England, and especially that of 1801. He declared that no communication should take place between the two powers till Denmark had received a just compensation, and, what was still more difficult, till peace was concluded between France and Great Britain. The motives assigned in this document showed vexation at having been the dupe of English policy ; and the cabinet of St. Petersburg bitterly complained of having hitherto supported the burdens of a defensive association, combined, however, for the direct and special interests of England. Finally, to confirm this energetic announcement of his grievances, the Emperor Alexander seized all the English vessels in his harbours, and sequestered all English property. Prussia, the humble satellite of the great luminary of the north, adopted similar measures ; and the impracticable system of European blockade against England seemed at length to be realised.

1808. But whilst all the north of Europe bent under the ascendancy of this prodigious good fortune, the scandalous events of Bayonne, and the heroic fortitude of Spain, announced the first days of its decline. The despotic and exacting friendship of Napoleon weighed on all his allies, who always remained his rivals. Who can recount all the bitter sacrifices to which the proud hearts of those kings were compelled to submit in his alliance? The Pope himself could not support their weight ; and whether a communication of Divine foresight made him see the result of the great example given by the Spanish nation, or whether he calculated on increasing the universal resentment by a blow from his own hand, he hurled against the ravisher of so many thrones, and the spoliator of the domains of the Church, a condemnatory bull of excommuni-

cation. (1808.) It seemed, in fact, that the Holy Father might do some injury to a power which had formerly courted his sanction; and he might now be feared, since he had already been deemed necessary. Pius VII. reasoned on this principle; since, reclaiming the dismembered territories of the states of the papal see—dismembered to form principalities for apostate priests—and appealing from that injustice to the law of nations, he also appealed to Napoleon himself, as to a son consecrated and sworn, to repair the damages and support the rights of the Catholic Church. But the consecrated son, whose troops already occupied the Roman States, only answered this powerless thunderbolt by seizing from the ecclesiastical territory the legations of Ancona, Urbino, Macerata, and Camerino, to annex them to the kingdom of Italy. The papal legate quitted Paris; and Napoleon announced, through his minister of foreign affairs, that if the Holy Father did not entirely adhere to the plans of his policy, the papal government would cease to exist (1808); “for,” said the note of his minister, “to refuse to enter into the views of the Emperor relative to Italy, which ought to form, by the most compact union of all its parts, a defensive league against the enemies of France, is to declare war against the Emperor. But the first result of war is conquest; and the first result of conquest is a change in the government.” Thus the Holy Father learned to his cost, that if kings consent still to make use of the spiritual authority of all the faithful, when desiring to encircle their power with the respect of the people, it is on condition that that authority shall never be exercised or invoked against them, and that they may also be permitted to demur to that divine jurisdiction.

However, Napoleon, as we have seen, placed no dependence on the sincerity of his new allies, or on the observance of the treaties which victory had imposed on him. To trust so little to the good faith of others, was, perhaps, to fail in it himself; and we must admit that the events then passing were little calculated to consolidate his reputation for political loyalty. (1808.) Spain, his ally, after having reposed in him the most implicit confidence,

unworthily oppressed, outraged, betrayed, vilified in the persons of her princes, whose kidnapping from Bayonne was an infamous act of brigandage,—Spain, trampled on by his armies, and calling her sons to combat, was an example well fitted to raise all Europe against him. A manifesto was then published by the chiefs whose patriotism headed the insurrection of that magnanimous people, and in it they said: “If the sacrifice of blood be necessary, it is better for us, perishing for our country, to die on the paternal banks of the Tagus, than to go as slaves, the vile instruments of the ambition of a foreign master, and succumb on the frozen shores of the Vistula and the Niemen.” These eloquent words reached the ears of the emperor of Austria and of all the German princes despoiled by Napoleon, who only awaited a favourable opportunity to escape from their humiliating tutelage. The memorable check at Baylen, so disgraceful to the French arms (1808), at the same time taught all that his military fortune, hitherto indomitable, could be resisted with success. Finally, the queen of Etruria, expelled from her dominions under the pretext of an illusory exchange, was another proof to the world of the future destinies which the perpetually aggressive ambition of Napoleon reserved for monarchs.

Austria silently prepared for war by the levy of new militias and diplomatic intrigues, the constant object of which was to dissolve in Germany the secondary states subsisting under the onerous protectorate of the French emperor. Under these circumstances took place the interview between Alexander and Napoleon at Erfurt (September 27th); an interview caused by the desire of the latter to satisfy himself of the pacific dispositions of the only rival whom he had to fear in the north. The two potentates there passed several days in festivals, surrounded by all the inferior sovereigns of Germany, and kings who sprang to thrones through the favour of Napoleon. The most perfect agreement, the most frank intimacy, appeared to unite these formidable arbiters of the fate of Europe. The French emperor thought he had entwined his rival in the meshes of his adroit policy; how-

ever, if we may depend on the avowal he afterwards made in his exile, he forgot that royal promises are mere deceitful words, and thus he was the dupe of the superficial candour of his august competitor as well as of his own illusions. However, on the point of quitting Erfurt, the two sovereigns wrote collectively to the king of England, inviting him to sign a peace in the name of the private interests of England. The British minister replied to these vague proposals in terms equally general; demanding, moreover, that if the negotiations were opened, her allies,—that is to say, Portugal, Sicily, Sweden, and Spain, then governed by a regency in the name of Ferdinand the Seventh,—should be admitted as parties, and be represented: thus, these pacific overtures with Great Britain had no other result than the interchange of some diplomatic letters. Napoleon returned to the south and entered Spain, there to repair the evils caused by the defeat at Baylen. He seized Madrid; and from the heart of that capital, thinking himself able to conquer the whole kingdom by seducing promises of liberty, he issued numerous decrees against all the old tyrannical institutions under which Spain had been accustomed to vegetate. But the indignation of that people repulsed his presents, and trusted to the future: Napoleon returned to Paris.

France seemed then to have attained to the zenith of her power; and the continent, in fact, saw only two monarchs on the throne—only trembled under two dazzling sceptres. Of the two, that of the south was still the heavier in the balance.

The will of Napoleon dominated from the Tagus to the Vistula; but this enormous power, perishable through its own excess, specially entailed its own ruin through the vicious means by which it had been established; that is to say, by violence, injustice, and particularly by bad faith. (April 1809.)

The fifth continental coalition, of which the elements were prepared with mysterious activity, burst forth by a sudden attack from Austria. In its manifesto, that power enumerated its grievances, which resolved themselves into a single phrase—the in-

satiable ambition of Napoleon. "It weighed down its allies by its insolent supremacy, treated them as vassals, prescribing to them, according to its caprice, peace or war." Austria could calculate on the subsidies of London, but the support she promised herself from St. Petersburg was not so certain; she was too unfortunate to obtain it. In spite of the prodigious efforts she made to support this struggle, her generals were completely beaten at Tann, Abensberg, Eckmühl, Ratisbon. Vienna was occupied by the French after a campaign of twenty-one days. During the rapid course of these victories, Russia, to prove her fidelity to the treaty of Tilsit, and probably to fulfil the new engagements she had contracted at Erfurt, declared war against Austria, and sent an army into Galicia. But that army, sluggish in its march, indecisive in its movements, seemed to have been sent rather to overlook the disputants, and watch the issue of events rather than participate in them. Hence the first doubts of Napoleon on the sincerity of his grand ally, and the first symptoms of a new rupture between the two powers.

The occupation of Vienna, which seemed to be the natural term of the war, was no more than an event. The time had passed when sovereigns were to learn to sacrifice their capitals to save their empires. At the moment when Marshal Lefevre occupied Inspruck, the Archduke Charles, having had the talent to draw Napoleon into the islands formed by the Danube, made his adversary pay dearly for the victory of Essling. The bridges had been broken down behind the French assailants; they remained a whole day under the fire of a formidable artillery (1809), composed of nearly 300 cannon, which fired on that first day 50,000 shot. Nearly 20,000 French killed or wounded, among whom were three generals and the intrepid Marshal Lannes, were the price paid for the mournful laurels of Essling. The battle of Raab, gained in the following month against the Archduke John, who, driven out of the Tyrol, had effected his retreat into Hungary; that of Wagram, against the Archduke Charles, which was

as hotly disputed and still more terrible than that of Essling, finished this campaign, in which Austria, at the price of blood, rallied from the reverses and continual faults of her generals since the first coalition.

12th July. The armistice of Znaim assured rather than arrested the successes of the French army; for at the moment when the Austrian emperor took the sudden resolution of laying down his arms and demanding peace, Bohemia had not yet been brought into conflict, and, as well as warlike Hungary, might have formed a dangerous battle-field for the French. A new contribution of nearly two hundred millions of francs (1809) was provisionally levied on the countries conquered from Austria, and more important results of that war were now about to be negotiated. By the treaty which was signed in the following month, Austria ceded, partly to Napoleon, partly to the confederation of the Rhine, different towns in Germany and Italy, with their dependencies; she was despoiled, in favour of the duchy of Warsaw, of all Western Galicia and the town of Cracow; finally, she abandoned to Russia a territory whose population contained 400,000 souls. The emperor of Austria also recognised the rights which Napoleon arrogated over the monarchies of the south of Europe, adhered to his continental system, and gave up all the countries included under the name of the Illyrian provinces. All these sacrifices were, however, but the preludes to a sacrifice still greater, and to an alliance more intimate. (1810.) The rocks of the Danube were still stained with the blood of thousands of soldiers, who, on both sides, had fallen victims to the hatred of their masters, when the two potentates, through cowardice on the one hand and ambition on the other, spoke of uniting their families, as if Austria was doomed to the last, and in spite of her own maxims and proud traditions, to justify the prophetic verse: *Tu, felix Austria, nube.* An archduchess was the price of the restitution of some territories; but this illustrious marriage of sinister augury marked

the culminant point from which was to fall the fortune of a great man, who, betraying his own destiny and the fortune of France, thus gratified himself with the low desires of an upstart. Afterwards, when hurled to the dust, recognising the capital fault he had committed after Wagram, in not having parcelled out the Austrian monarchy, by placing on three different heads the crowns of the three monarchies of which it was composed, he exclaimed, in bitter sorrow, "That marriage destroyed me!"*

At the commencement of the following year, pursuing with more zeal than utility his prohibitory system against England,

* He had contemplated this scheme of partition before his marriage with Maria Louisa, but afterwards he said he could not effect it. On the article of marriage his sentiments were too plebeian. "Austria had become my family, nevertheless that marriage ruined me. If I had not thought myself secure, and even supported on that point, I would have postponed for three years the resurrection of Poland; I would have waited till Spain was subjected and pacified. I placed my foot on an abyss covered with flowers," &c. (*Mémorial de Sainte Hélène*, tom. iii. p. 159.) Napoleon pretended, according to the testimony of the same book, that there was a competition between Russia and Austria to give him a wife after he had repudiated Josephine, and that the preference given to the latter power profoundly irritated the former. M. Las Casas thus expresses himself: "If the Emperor had wished, Alexander, as he assured me, would certainly have given him his sister in marriage; his policy would have determined him, even had he not so inclined. He was thunderstruck on hearing of the marriage with Austria, and exclaimed, 'I am now sent back to the depths of my forests.' If at first he seemed to tergiversate, it was because he required time to decide; his sister was very young, and he also required the consent of his mother. But the empress-mother was one of the bitterest enemies of Napoleon. Believing, moreover, all the absurdities, all the ridiculous stories circulated about his physical organisation, 'How,' said she, 'could I marry my daughter to a man who is not fit to be the husband of any woman? Another man will enter my daughter's bed if children are desired; she is not made for that.' 'Mother,' replied Alexander, 'can you seriously credit the libels of London and of Paris? If that is the only difficulty, if that alone embarrasses you, I can assure you to the contrary, and many others can give you the same assurance.'" (Tom. iv. p. 312.) Colonel Boutoulin, in his *Military History of the Campaign of 1812*, assigns, as might be expected, a very different reason for the rupture between the two sovereigns; and on the affair of the marriage he thus

Napoleon occupied with his troops the Duchy of Oldenburgh, in order to complete the continental blockade throughout the whole line of the North Sea. This new usurpation furnished the Emperor Alexander with a fresh subject of discontent, already alarmed by the recent alliance of Napoleon with Austria. (1811.) But the star of this conqueror waxed pale in Spain; the magnanimous resistance of that country triumphed over the bravery of his soldiers and the skill of his generals. From defeat on defeat, Wellington, powerfully seconded by the national feeling, and perhaps by the little harmony that existed among the French commanders, succeeded in balancing fortune, and took Badajoz; Soult was obliged to evacuate Portugal, and King Joseph to abandon Madrid.

Then commenced the new hostile demonstrations of Russia, whose troops already occupied the western frontier of Lithuania. A new Russian army marched towards the duchy; and an insolent note was presented, as an ultimatum, at Paris by the Russian ambassador, who, on default of its acceptance, threatened to quit Paris in eight days. Napoleon, who was not accustomed to a diplomacy so abrupt and so haughty, and who was not in the habit of allowing himself to be anticipated, nevertheless desired to make an attempt to win back his illustrious adversary to pacific sentiments;* and although war was declared by the

expresses himself: "He, Napoleon, first cast his eyes on one of the grand-duchesses of Russia; but his proposals were so coldly received at St. Petersburg, that he at once perceived that that negotiation would have no satisfactory result. He then turned his views to Austria, and was more fortunate." He also says, "Moreover, Napoleon had been shocked at the difficulties by which his plan of marrying one of the archduchesses had been met at St. Petersburg, and eagerly desired an opportunity to revenge himself, in making the Emperor Alexander feel all the weight of his enormous power." We also find in the *Memorial*, that a council of ministers having been convened by Napoleon on the subject of this marriage, and having pronounced by a majority in favour of an archduchess, "Russia took great umbrage at it, and considered itself played with." (Tom. i. p. 396.)

* If we may believe the *Memorial from St. Helena*, tom. iii. p. 130.

mere fact of the recall of the Russian ambassador, he sent his own representative, Lauriston, to Wilna, where the Emperor Alexander then was ; but the French ambassador was refused an audience, and thus war became inevitable.

Bernadotte, abandoning the cause of him whose fortune had created his own, passed under the banners of Alexander, who promised him Norway. The Russian sovereign also made peace with the Grand Signior, that he might be able to employ in the dreadful struggle that was preparing the troops stationed on the Turkish frontier. At the commencement of 1812, Napoleon still seemed to retreat before his own thoughts, and to wish to shake off the yoke of the demon who possessed him, and urged him to this war. A writer,* whose recent work has excited to the highest degree all the reminiscences and all the emotions which are attached to the name of this celebrated man, has traced a vivid picture of the agitation to which Napoleon was a prey, when on the eve of staking, against a destiny stronger than himself, so much glory and so much power, so vast an empire, and one of the most magnificent positions in which the favour of heaven ever placed a mortal. According to De Segur, his nights were troubled by the violent conflict between his desires and his adverse judgment ; and during the day he had always on his table a general summary of the state of each power in Europe, calculated to warn him of the danger of his position, and point out all the hazards of an enterprise which, in spite of himself, occupied his mind.

In the month of March 1812, according to the same author, the ambassador Czernicheff carried new proposals of peace to his sovereign. Napoleon offered to abandon all his views on Poland, and only demanded the redress of some grievances. These grievances were, first, the ukase of the 31st of December, 1810, which prohibited the introduction into Russia of the greater part of the French manufactures, and destroyed the continental

* Count de Segur.

system ; secondly, the protest of Alexander against the annexation of the Duchy of Oldenburgh ; thirdly, the armaments of Russia. Napoleon then renewed the offer he had made already of an indemnity for the Duchy of Oldenburgh. Alexander, in reply to these proposals, demanded in his ultimatum the complete evacuation of Prussia and Swedish Pomerania, and a diminution of the garrison of Dantzic ; he did not refuse the indemnity offered for Oldenburgh ; he assented to commercial arrangements with France, and even to modify the ukase of the 31st December, 1810. All these negotiations were vain ; they only prove, as well as the stormy hesitations of Napoleon, that so great a war wanted a great motive ; and that in determining with precision the causes which kindled it, not one can be found based on the real interest of the two nations ; the only stake at issue was the pride of the two sovereigns. But when the French armies had crossed the Vistula, then the war became a defensive one to the Russians, a war of conservation, and consequently wholly national. The fatality which had suggested the first thought of that expedition also chose the means of its execution. Never, if we may credit the writer of the book from which we have just quoted, never did imprudence accumulate so many faults in a project on which depended the fate of an army of four hundred thousand men, and perhaps of a nation.

That army contained within itself all the possible germs of disorganisation : there was no agreement among the generals, no harmony between the different corps, little confidence in the definite issue of the invasion ; and an opposition, more or less declared, against this gigantic attempt, on the part of those who ought principally to have united for its success. At Dresden Napoleon still awaited the result of the negotiations between Lauriston and General Narbonne. “ He hoped,” says De Segur, “ to conquer Alexander by the mere sight of his united army, and especially by the menacing splendour of his sojourn in the capital of Saxony.” The same illusions followed him to Moscow.

But these errors of his pride were not limited, according to the same writer, to deceiving him as to the preparations of his adversary. Such was his blindness at this unfortunate period of his astonishing career, that, marching from deception to deception, neither the continual flight of the Russians, nor the conflagration of all their towns, which they abandoned to him in succession, could awaken his genius from its slumber, and show him the results with which this Parthian and terrible mode of warfare so evidently threatened him.

The army which was about to enter Russia, one of the finest and most imposing which was ever assembled under French banners, was divided into fourteen or fifteen corps, each under the command of a chief—prince, king, or marshal. The entire number of troops amounted to about four hundred and fifty thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were Italians, eighty thousand of the Confederation of the Rhine, thirty thousand Poles, thirty thousand Austrians, and twenty thousand Prussians. The Russian troops were divided into the first and second army of the west, and commanded by Barclay de Tolly, Bagration, and Tormasoff. Their force, including different detached bodies and their irregular cavalry, was about three hundred and sixty thousand combatants. Napoleon exclaimed, on passing over the Niemen, “A fatality hangs over the Russians: let their destiny be accomplished.” Alexander, in summoning his subjects to arms, invoked *Fatherland and Liberty*. Moreover, the Russian sovereign did not omit any expedient calculated to excite the enthusiasm of a superstitious people. He obtained immense sacrifices from the people of Moscow; and no doubt he would have obtained greater, if they could have foreseen that which the terrible but admirable patriotism of one of their nobles imposed on them at a later date. Moreover, it appears that Alexander did not count upon this rash invasion of his enemy; and that, while meditating for two years on a rupture, he imagined his frontiers sufficiently defended by distance and the inclemency of the climate.

The grand army having marched on the Niemen in three separate masses, passed that river without an obstacle, and with equal facility entered Wilna, the capital of Lithuania. The Russians had just evacuated that town, and fleeing before their enemy, yielded their frontiers with a promptitude which seemed to mask some snare; and on the bank of this new river only a single Cossack officer appeared. In the eyes of the soldiers there was something menacing in so much solitude and silence. A frightful storm arose, which fortified their superstitious terrors; the roads and fields were inundated, 10,000 horses perished; and a squadron of Poles, ordered by Napoleon to plunge into the waters of the Wilia, were drowned in attempting to cross that river. At the entry of the French army, and particularly at the sight of their countrymen, rescued from exile by the fortune of Napoleon, the Lithuanians thought they had again become free. They wept for joy on unfurling the national banners, and the Diet of Warsaw was immediately opened. Constituted as a general confederation, that assembly declared the kingdom of Poland re-established, convoked all the members of the Diet, summoned all the Poles in the Russian army to abandon Russia, and through a general council presented an address to Napoleon. The answer of Napoleon was in substance, "Be patriots—that is well; but I have many interests to conciliate, and certainly your re-establishment must not cost any sacrifice to Austria. In other respects, I will do all that depends on me to second your resolutions." This unexpected language suddenly destroyed all their hopes, and henceforward the principal object of the war seemed abandoned. Napoleon, however, attended to the provisional organisation of the country; he allowed it to work out its enfranchisement, but he wished to retain the right of governing it. Exactions and the indiscipline of the French completed the discontent of the Lithuanians, already pillaged by the Russians. However, from the north to the south of Europe there was a rally again against the common enemy; and the powers, closing

in their ranks in the path marked out by the English diplomacy, grouped themselves around Russia.

Sweden signed a treaty of peace with England at Oerebro ; the regency of Cadiz, acting in the name of Ferdinand VII., also made common cause with the cabinet of St. Petersburg. The treaty of Viliky-Louki, the first which history records between the monarchies of Charles V. and Peter the Great, fully attested, by its strange novelty, that long chain of resentments and hatreds which menaced France. At the same time Wellington gained against Marshal Marmont the battle of Vittoria, and the feeble King Joseph tottered on his throne of a day.

The march of the emperor on Wilna having been extremely rapid, his convoys could not follow him : he would not wait for them in that capital of Lithuania ; but hurried away by his unreflecting impatience and the hope of a decisive battle, he let loose on the footsteps of the enemy 400,000 men with twenty days' provision, in a country which could not maintain the 20,000 Swedes of Charles XII. Of the immense droves of oxen which followed the army, a very large portion afterwards arrived at Wilna and Minsk ; but they were almost useless. The same occurred to the corn sent from Dantzic to Wilna. The boats were stopped in the beds of the dried-up rivers, and the wagons collected to remedy the failure of this first mode of transport only arrived several days after the departure of the troops. The disasters of this expedition then commenced ; and famine constantly harassed the grand army, both when advancing and retreating.

We have said that the army marched divided into three principal masses : it was the grand column, that of the centre, which suffered most ; because it followed the road that the Russians had ruined, and the devastation of which was completed by the French advanced guard. The columns which took lateral roads found necessities, but they were badly husbanded. Thus this army, without a commissariat, advanced, living by a pillage

which exasperated the people, and which nothing could prevent. Those whom a sentiment of honour restrained between the spur of necessity and the horror of brigandage, escaped from this cruel alternative by despair, that is to say, by suicide. According to the report made to the emperor by the Duke of Treviso, from the Niemen to the Wilna nothing was seen but devastated houses, carriages and wagons abandoned. The roads were encumbered with the carcasses of men and horses; contagion became the auxiliary of famine; the guard itself had cruelly suffered. The emperor repulsed as impossible these details which were but too true, and added, that soldiers well commanded never died of hunger. The emperor was irritated at the recital of evils which he judged irremediable, his policy imposing on him the necessity of prompt and decisive success. After having disposed every thing for a slow and methodical war, he lost sight of all precautions, abandoned all preparatory measures, and allowed himself to be hurried away by the habitude, the necessity of short wars, rapid victories, and sudden peace.*

Such was the state of things when Balachoff, a Russian minister, presented himself at the French advanced posts, bearing proposals of peace from his master. But these vague proposals, which did not lay down any new basis of negotiation, and did not contain any stipulations, were taken for the pretext and not the real cause of the journey of Balachoff. It was another intimation of the manner in which the Russians proposed to conduct the war. Napoleon sent back Balachoff with inadmissible demands. However, Alexander seemed by this step to have crowned the measure of moderation, whatever might have been his secret thoughts.

Napoleon remained twenty days at Wilna, occupied with re-organising the country, receiving deputations, forwarding orders to France and Spain, forming an entrenched camp, throwing bridges over the Wilna, and constructing a citadel on the spot

* Segur.

where the ancient palace of the Jagellons had stood. When he at last quitted that city, several engagements had already taken place between the French and the Russians ; but these were mere skirmishes : neither the warlike impatience of the king of Naples, nor the skilful operations of the Prince of Eckmulh, could obtain a battle, and justify the hopes of Napoleon. On learning that Bagration and 40,000 Russians had been cut off from the army of Alexander by a manœuvre of Davoust, he exclaimed, “ They are in my power.” But the indiscipline of the king of Westphalia caused this grand stroke to fail. Jerome had been placed under the orders of the Prince of Eckmulh ; and unable to endure this unexpected subordinate grade, he quitted his army and his post, allowing Bagration to retrograde, instead of forcing him to pass through a defile where Davoust was awaiting his appearance. However, these two generals met at Mohilef ; and after a combat in which 12,000 French repulsed 35,000 Russians, Bagration marched to join Barclay de Tolly. Napoleon only quitted Wilna to march to Witepsk. The enemy, again leaving open all the roads to the invaders, abandoned an entrenched camp they had formed by prodigious efforts in front of that town, on the banks of the Drissa. However, by a contrary strategy, they seemed desirous of occupying the defiles and woods which cover Witepsk. There the Russians awaited the French ; Napoleon at length counted on a battle, and said to Murat in the evening, when taking leave of him, “ To-morrow, at five o’clock, the sun of Austerlitz !” Nevertheless none of the general officers shared this hope of a decisive battle on the following day ; and Murat himself, who began to comprehend the Russian system of war, by having so repeatedly followed without being able to overtake them, desired in vain to persuade the emperor to profit by the advantage and the ardour the troops displayed in a first engagement. There 200 riflemen covered themselves with glory by resisting a numerous cavalry, which attempted to crush them. Napoleon obstinately persisted in his illusion.

The dawn of the following day no longer found the Russians in their camp; they had disappeared; but with so much order and prudence, that no vestige of precipitancy or fear attested that they had halted there on the previous evening. The French entered Witepsk, which offered to the astonished soldiers the spectacle of the usual solitude. The army, however, was fatigued with this vain pursuit, with this hope always deceived of a great victory which was to terminate their labours. The chief himself was fatigued; and after advancing some leagues beyond Witepsk without finding any trace of the enemy, he returned on his steps; and entering the imperial quarters, he unloosed his sword, and throwing it hurriedly on the maps with which his tables were covered, exclaimed, "Here I stop; here I wish to recruit, to rally, to repose my army, and organise Poland. The campaign of 1812 is finished; that of 1813 will do the rest."

This resolution was too much recommended by circumstances not to appear sincere; and, moreover, the measures which were taken, with the greatest activity, to ensure cantonments and subsistence for the different divisions of the army, removed any doubt as to the real plan of the emperor. His position was admirable to favour its execution; he rested on the Borysthenes and the Dwina, and extended his line of defence from Riga to Bobruisk, having as a central point Witepsk, a town very easy to fortify. Thirty-six bakehouses and establishments of all kinds were there quickly constructed, even the town was embellished; actors from Paris were ordered, and Napoleon addressed these words to Count Daru: "As to you, sir, take care that we live well here; for we will not commit the folly of Charles XII." He said to Murat, whose presumptuous ardour accused the Russians of cowardice, and who wished constantly to pursue them, "Let us plant our eagles here; 1813 will see us at Moscow; 1814 at St. Petersburg: the war with Russia is a war of three years." But this resolution was ephemeral. Na-

napoleon had only ceded to the necessity of giving some repose to the army, and to the hope of receiving from Alexander proposals more positive and more satisfactory than those he had received at Wilna. At the end of a few days, his natural impatience returning, he dreamed of the capture of Moscow, the name of which at intervals escaped his lips. He forcibly represented to himself the inconveniences of the defensive position he had taken up at Witepsk, accustomed as he was to subjugate men by astonishment, to triumph by the sudden boldness of his attacks; he figured to himself Russia and England believing him conquered because he had halted; finally, he thought that the duration of such an enterprise increased the danger. Tormented by his doubts and hesitations, his soul was a battle-field on which the fear of the future and the confidence in his past fortune disputed for ascendancy. Thus, says the historian of the campaign of 1812, the same danger which ought, perhaps, to have recalled him to the Niemen, or fixed him on the Dwina, pushed him forward to Moscow. This determination, according to the same writer, deceived the hopes and provoked the discontent of all the chiefs of the army. Count Lobau and the Duke of Vicenza had the courage to express theirs, and Napoleon repulsed them with bitterness. He reproached his generals with their distaste for war, in consequence of the wealth with which he had loaded them: "You were born in a bivouac," said he to one of them, "and there you shall die." However, whether through desertion, sickness, or famine, the army had already been diminished one-third before quitting Witepsk. The want of food began to be felt. The foragers sent out never reappeared, or returned with empty hands. The guard alone consumed the little obtained by marauding; and the rest of the army, condemned to the most cruel privations, murmured and perished. The hospitals were insufficient to accommodate the sick; there was a want of room, of provisions, of medicine. In Witepsk alone several thousands of soldiers were carried off by dysentery. These suffer-

ings were not unknown to the emperor. He could no longer deceive himself as to the tactics of the Russians; he who had thought to rouse them to insurrection by speaking of liberty! He saw they did not understand the word; moreover, intercepted proclamations and correspondence taught him by what odious names and what frightful colours the French and their chief were described to the people of these countries. Every thing announced on this hostile soil an implacable war as soon as winter arrived, the natural auxiliary of the northmen. To all such observations, too pregnant with truth, he only answered by uttering the word "Moscow." "We must, at least," said he, "advance as far as Smolensko." On quitting Witepsk, he learned with excessive chagrin that the Turks had signed peace with the Russians at Bucharest. This was an additional reason for his halting; he persisted in his departure. All the divisions united and directed their march to Smolensko, ascending the right bank of the Dnieper. He himself left Witepsk on the 13th August.

The army lived from hand to mouth; it had not twenty-four hours' provisions; the emperor ordered supplies for fifteen days; he fancied that his pressing and repeated orders would suffice to conquer nature itself. The enemy always fleeing, only left behind them some Cossacks, ordered to break down the bridges and burn villages. The villages in which the enemy were surprised before they could destroy them, were pillaged. The different regiments of this army followed each other in isolated parties, each advancing independently of the rest. The regiment which preceded did not think of affording any succour, any facility, to that which was to follow. It might have been said that there was neither a staff nor a commissariat in that immense army, and that the soul of that great body no longer existed. Marshal Macdonald occupied Dunabourgh, and Marshal Oudinot defeated Wittgenstein at Obairszma on the banks of the Drissa; they fought at Krasnoe a body of 6000 men, the remnant of which escaped to Smolensko; at length, on the 16th of August, the

French beheld at the same time that city and the whole Russian army commanded by Barclay and Bagration. It extended over the plain in long and black columns. At the sight, Napoleon, transported with joy, clapped his hands, and exclaimed, "At length I have them in my grasp." Bagration, it is said, wished to save Smolensko by a battle; Barclay, more prudent, thought it sufficient to protect the flight of the inhabitants, and empty the magazines. When these measures had been executed, the Russian army continued its retreat; and on the following day not a soldier was seen on the field where Napoleon had hoped for a battle. The rear-guard of the enemy was uselessly pursued; and Napoleon, deeply agitated, followed several versts in that direction, as if his presence or his voice could stop their progress. Henceforward he only seemed to consider Smolensko as a passage to be instantly seized by a strong hand. This frenzy of pursuit had, however, exhausted the strength and patience of all, soldiers and generals. No one was any longer deluded as to the probable result of this murderous expedition; and Murat himself, a soldier born only for fighting, and the whole of whose military language was comprised in the word *forward*, on this occasion opposed the resolution of the emperor. He was heard to exclaim that it was useless to take Smolensko at the price of blood, since they would at once abandon it; and as to a battle, if the enemy would not fight, it was time to halt. But Napoleon only saw Moscow; honour, glory, repose,—all were there for him. Nevertheless, his generals, agitated by sinister presentiments, repeated among themselves, "Moscow will ruin us." Such was the energy of this universal conviction, that Murat was seen, inviting death, to press forward his horse under the fire of a formidable battery which crushed the French, and remain immovable in the midst of that volcano. Foreseeing a disastrous future, he sought death; happy had he obtained it, and if a Russian bullet had saved him from the blow of the satellite Nunziante, who, three years afterwards, caused him to expiate on the shores of Calabria his royalty and

his treason. Smolensko was obstinately defended by the Russians, nor did they abandon it till they had set it on fire. "The army traversed these smoking and ensanguined ruins with order, warlike music, and the accustomed pomp, triumphing over the deserted rubbish, and having none but itself as the witness of its glory ; a spectacle without spectators, a fruitless victory, a sanguinary renown, of which the smoke that surrounded us, and which seemed to be our only conquest, was but the too faithful emblem."* Unable to come up with and smite the Russians, the emperor railed against them, pointing out their want of resolution, treating them as women, and, in fact, believing that they had degenerated from the rude and savage valour of their ancestors. But these words, which gushed forth with all the bitterness of the most profound irritation, only proved to all his keen disappointment. It was then that an officer, arriving from the camp of Schwartzzenburgh, apprised the emperor that Tormasoff and his army, stationed in the north, between Minsk and Warsaw, had invaded the grand duchy, and defeated General Regnier. However, the Austrians had assisted Regnier ; and Tormasoff, forced to retreat in his turn, had rallied under Tchitchakoff, commanding the army of the Danube. This junction increased the dangers of the grand army, and became an additional reason with Napoleon to obtain a decisive battle and reach Moscow.

The army, always deceived by vain promises of repose, loudly complained of its misery. The generals themselves allowed language to escape from them which was the precursor of indiscipline ; and many even went so far as to desire defeat, thinking that it would disgust the emperor. Now, if such were the feelings of the French, we may judge what were those of the allies ; whom force had taken from their firesides, and dragged into these frightful regions, bound to the car of foreign glory ! On the day after a reverse, would not they prove enemies ? Moreover, so

* Segur:

far from France, insurrections, conspiracies in the interior, were to be dreaded ; and how apply a remedy ? Under such circumstances, the confidence of the emperor seemed folly to those who most nearly approached his person. Rapp, who then arrived from Paris, spoke frankly of the fearful disorder which, from the frontier of Poland, had every where on his route met his gaze. This march, victorious without combat, left behind it more ruin than a defeat. “ Privations, continual bivouacs, pestilential exhalations from so many carcases of men and horses killed by fatigue and hunger, had engendered diseases, another source of destruction, the horrible reproduction of death from death, which covered and followed the traces of this gigantic expedition. Whole battalions of the allied troops disbanded themselves, and, under a leader of their own choice, went through the country, seizing on any village, established themselves in it, and received with fires of musketry those who arrived to forage.” * Napoleon replied to these discouraging details by a feigned promise to halt at Smolensko. He said that that town was a good point for cantonments ; and that he wished to stop behind that rampart to rally his troops, to give them repose, to receive reinforcements and provisions. All Poland was in his power ; and that conquest seemed to him sufficient for a war of two months. But, whether he deceived himself, or wished for a moment to deceive others, he almost immediately yielded to the dominating impulsion which pressed him forward. Murat and Ney, the two most daring, were placed in front ; the prudent and methodical Davoust was to obey the king of Naples ; and while recommending the avoidance of a decisive engagement, Napoleon so disposed his forces as to compel circumstances to lead to that result. Segur, however, thinks that he spoke sincerely when he said, “ Let us stop at Smolensko.” If there is any thing more astonishing than this struggle of his genius against fatality, assuredly it is the resignation of all those men who marched under the empire of his will

* Segur.

to a ruin they believed certain, sometimes murmuring under the yoke, but never daring to shake it off.

As Napoleon had anticipated, Murat and Ney, on seeing the enemy, no longer remembered that they had been prohibited from fighting; and falling on their rear-guard at Valoutina, they brought into action the whole of their troops in a combat which on both sides was fierce and murderous. There perished the intrepid General Gudin, in defending the bridge of Kolowdnia against Barclay de Tolly, who, over it, wished to extricate himself from the defiles in which he was entangled, and where Ney pressed him. Ney, himself wounded in several places, and covered with blood, only stopped the battle at night, and when all was stricken down on the post which he had snatched from the Russians. But this combat, in which the attack was only made in front, was scarcely productive of any success, because Junot, with the Westphalians, did not assail the flanks of the enemy, as he had been formally ordered to do.

The most positive result of that affair was to fill Smolensko with wounds and groans. The hospitals there were increased, encumbered; and the impossibility of providing for the wants and assuaging the sufferings of so many unfortunates at once, caused great numbers to be forgotten, who perished from want of succour. Murat, always pursuing the hostile army, arrived at Dorogobouje, where the Russians, ranged behind a wood and a ravine, appeared disposed to sustain a new shock. At this news Napoleon hurried forward with all his guard; but Barclay had already disappeared, only leaving behind him, as was his custom, ruin and ashes. The march was immediately directed on Moscow; and this last part of the route seemed somewhat less devastated; country-houses and villages had not been burned; provisions could be obtained; ready to see their adversary caught in the snare, it seemed that the enemy feared to discourage him by depriving him of sustenance. A common understanding was clearly announced by so many circumstances; it required all the

confidence that a great man could place in himself not to be deceived.

Napoleon, however, manifested somewhat more disquietude. Hitherto he had expected from the Emperor Alexander a more positive and more satisfactory communication than that which Ballachoff brought to Wilna; still no letter arrived, and he saw himself constrained to make the first advance to a new negotiation. He ordered the major-general to write to Barclay, and sent to his illustrious rival, the Russian emperor, protestations of friendship, which certainly were singular in the state of their relations. It required much to induce the Emperor Alexander to send him an answer; and at that very moment he was holding an interview in Finland with the Prince-Royal of Sweden, Bernadotte, to determine him to pass the Rubicon, and act offensively against Napoleon. It was at this same conference, at which the English ambassador was admitted, that they decided on writing to Moreau, offering him a command, which, for the misfortune of his glory, he accepted.

The temporising system adopted by General Barclay, while it roused the indignation of his own followers, fatigued the French. The Emperor Alexander, compelled to yield to the general clamour, fortified by the complaints of Bagration, replaced Barclay by Kutusoff, an old general of the school of Paul I. Every thing now announced a decisive battle, equally desired by both sides. Under these circumstances, at the moment when the French army entered the smoking ruins of Gjatz burned by the enemy, a Russian flag-of-truce arrived. The real mission was not peace; and there can be the less doubt on this point, as a French officer having foolishly asked the Russian envoy what they would find at Moscow, his answer was "Pultawa." That answer was the signal of battle. In fact, the Russian army halted, reinforced by new detachments and fresh levies, and the plain of Borodino bristled with entrenchments. On the 6th September, 1812, the two armies were in presence of each other, nearly equal in men and in artil-

lery ; but the Russians had the advantage of the ground, and of one common language. They remained all that day observing each other, silently preparing for the more dreadful encounter on the morrow. It is here—it is on the banks of the Mosqwa, if we may believe the new historian, that the superior genius to which hitherto all had succumbed, now began sensibly and visibly to fail. The two nights which preceded the battle brought him no tranquillity or repose. He did not sleep the imposing sleep of a hero.* Frightened at the destitution of his soldiers, he asked himself with anxiety, how they could sustain a long and terrible shock. He cursed war, calling it the profession, the trade of barbarians ; and complained of the inconstancy of fortune, which then began to abandon him. But in the midst of so much tardy solicitude, the preservation of his guard chiefly occupied his thoughts. He summoned Bessières, who commanded it, to ascertain if this picked and choice body was in want of any thing. He several times renewed this demand ; ordered that three days' rations of biscuit and rice should be distributed among those old soldiers ; moreover, as if he suspected on this head the exactitude of the chiefs, he arose during the night, personally to learn from the grenadiers of his guard before his tent, if they had received rations for three days. Satisfied with their answer, he returned to his couch, and again seemed to sleep. However, in this extreme situation, on the eve of so great an event, he addressed a proclamation to his army, full of grandeur blended with simplicity ; the words are too historical not to be here recorded. “ Soldiers,” said he, “ behold the battle

* The physical sufferings which overpowered him were the principal cause of the sudden disappearance of that impassibility which hitherto had dominated in the moral physiognomy of Napoleon. This fact, admitted by Segur, could be fully substantiated by him by the publication of the reports furnished by the physicians then in attendance on the emperor ; and it is astonishing that the author of the history of the grand army of 1812 has not yet made use of those documents which are within his power, to confirm, in a point of such importance, assertions which have been imputed to him as a crime.

you have so ardently desired. Henceforward victory depends on you,—it is necessary to you; it will give you abundance, good winter quarters, and a prompt return to your country. Conduct yourselves as at Austerlitz, at Friedland, at Witepsk, and at Smolensko; and let the most distant posterity cite your conduct on this day; let it be said of you, ‘He was at that grand battle under the walls of Moscow.’” On his side, the old general Kutusoff neither neglected words nor any other means which might influence the imagination of the Russians. He advanced into the midst of his army, all under arms, surrounded by religious and military pomp, and preceded by the holy images, to which popular credulity assigned supernatural power; then, in his strain of savage eloquence, he commenced by invectives against Napoleon. He called him a son of hell, and the tyrannical disturber of the world. Then he pointed out to the Russians their cities in ruins, spoke of their emperor, and finished by invoking their piety and their patriotism. “Virtues of instinct,” says Segur with reason, “among these rude people, who were yet but the creatures of feeling, but on that very account the more formidable soldiers. This solemn spectacle, this harangue, the exhortations of their officers, and the benedictions of their priests, exalted their courage to fanaticism; and all, down to the last recruited soldier, thought himself bound by God to defend their sacred soil.” Napoleon still feared that the enemy would escape, and with them the hopes of a battle. In the night which immediately preceded this memorable conflict, he awoke several times, and demanded if they were in presence. However, this inquietude alone did not trouble his slumber, but an irritating fever, the consequence of the fatigues and anxieties which had exhausted him during this long march, manifested itself in a dry cough and burning thirst. Dysentery, with him an old complaint, came on, and rendered the symptoms of his fever more alarming. At length, in the morning, one of Ney’s officers arrived to demand the order of battle; and at that voice, at the warlike impatience of the first of his soldiers, Napo-

leon, reanimated, rose to embrace victory, and exclaimed, "We hold them now! march! open to us the gates of Moscow!" Up and dressed since five o'clock, he awaited, often looking towards the sky, the first dawn of day; and when its earliest rays beamed from the east, "Behold," he exclaimed, "the sun of Austerlitz!"

The emperor gave the signal of attack, which was commenced by the troops of Prince Eugene. But, if we may believe the historian of 1812, he confusedly multiplied his orders, excited himself beyond the bounds of prudence and judgment, and engaged in front a battle which he had conceived in an oblique order.* In this memorable battle, blood was prodigally spilt, valour eminently displayed on both sides; there was seen the most enthusiastic contempt of death, the boundless love of glory—all that nature and opinion could infuse into the heart of man of heroic and warlike virtue. Soldiers exhausted by long fatigues, conquered by hunger, recovered strength to fight like lions.

The French cavalry, braving cannon and bullet, which fell as hail from the clouds, rushed to the heights, penetrated the redoubts; and the Russians, no less obstinate, no less intrepid, perished under the sabres of the cuirassiers without abandoning their posts. The gunners were killed at their pieces, one hand embracing the cannon, the other still grasping the hilt of their sabres. This battle is one of the most furious and murderous in the annals of modern military warfare. More than one hundred

* The distinguished officer who, on the side of the Russians, has also made himself the historian of this campaign, also thinks that Napoleon, by false manœuvres, lost an almost certain victory. "If," says he, "instead of seriously attacking the left of the position of the army, he had only made vigorous demonstrations in that direction, and pushed forward a strong mass on the old road to Smolensko to support the operations of Poniatowski against the corps of Tormasoff, the latter could not have opposed a long resistance to the superior forces against which he would have had to struggle; and the enemy, in pursuing him, would have been enabled to have traversed the main road in the rear of the Russian army, which, cut off from Mojousk, and hemmed up in the angle formed by the Moskwa and the Koloiza, would have been reduced to the most deplorable condition."

and twenty thousand cannon-balls were fired. The loss of the Russians was immense, that of the French almost equal; and nearly one hundred thousand men there fell, with a very great number of officers and generals. The French army had specially to regret Augustus Caulaincourt, who was killed on entering the grand redoubt, at the head of the fifth regiment of cuirassiers, a young warrior who had been present at more battles than he counted years; and the intrepid Mountbrun, the worthy successor of General Lasale, and, like him, the honour of the light cavalry. On the side of the French, the number of the generals killed and wounded was forty. A sudden cold fell on the field of battle; and we may judge how torturing the bivouac must have been for so many wounded wretches! On the following day, the enemy, despairing of retaking the redoubts they had lost, abandoned their position, and then it was that the extent of slaughter caused by that sanguinary battle could be estimated. "On traversing the ground on which the conflict had taken place," says an eye-witness of the engagement,* "we found on an extent of about a square league, the earth covered with dead and wounded; the intervals between these mounds of carcasses were filled with arms, lances, casques, and cuirasses, and by muskets, more numerous than hail-stones after a violent storm. The interior of the ravines was the most frightful to behold; almost all the wounded, by a natural instinct, had dragged themselves thither to avoid fresh blows; and these unfortunate men, heaped one on the other and floating in blood, uttered horrible groans, demanding death to terminate their sufferings. The carts were insufficient; our barren pity could only deplore the evils inseparable from a war so atrocious."

This war was indeed inhuman, and especially this battle of Moskwa! All the batteries of the enemy were carried by the French cavalry. It was the sabre which besieged and carried the

* Eugene Labaume.—*Rélation Complète de la Campagne de Russie*. Sixth edition, 1820.

palisades and entrenchments. However, so much blood was almost uselessly spilt. Kutusoff claimed the victory, caused *Te Deum* to be chanted; and if this boasting appeared ridiculous, it proved, at least, that the demi-victory of the French had not crushed him. One hundred and seventy thousand Russians had fought; and Kutusoff, still at the head of imposing forces, seemed only to have lost his entrenchments and some leagues of ground.

It is in narrating the equivocal results of so costly an affair, that the historian of the campaign of 1812 has imputed to Napoleon hesitations and faults; fatal, in fact, to the glory of that great captain, if ever they should be clearly proved. According to Segur, at the moment when the heroic vigour of Ney and Murat opened the road to victory, Napoleon, instead of sending them reinforcements, which they had demanded, and which their exhaustion rendered indispensable, “remained long in deliberation; and finally, after reiterated orders and counter-orders to his young guard, the decisive moment did not to him seem to have arrived.” He had already said to Rapp, that he wished to gain it without them. Murat again sent an aide-de-camp to demand succour: the emperor promised his young guard; but scarcely had they advanced a few paces, when, in person, he commanded them to halt. His answer to those who pressed him was, “That they should learn to wait; that the battle would be of long duration; that the critical hour of battle had not yet arrived.”* But the hour of his battle never arrived. His immobility, his power-

* According to Colonel Boutourlin, “nothing can excuse Napoleon for having, so to speak, terminated the battle at three o’clock in the afternoon, when new efforts on his part would have infallibly secured victory. *The last reserves of the Russians had already been engaged*; whilst the young and old guard of France, with their cavalry, forming more than 20,000 men, had not yet taken any share in the battle. It is incontestable that, by putting into action the thirty-two battalions and the twenty-seven squadrons which composed this chosen body, Napoleon must ultimately have succeeded in overwhelming the Russian army, and deciding their rout in the four hours of daylight which remained.”

less imperturbability, and that fortitude which wore the character of apathy, were remarked by every one, and diversely explained; the army no longer found its chief; and, at the critical moment, that grand body was without a soul to move and direct it. Napoleon only manifested his will by an obstinate refusal to give his reserve; and such was the discontent of his marshals, that Ney, the most impetuous of them all, exclaimed, "Since he no longer makes use of himself, and is no longer general, let him elsewhere be emperor; let him return to the Tuileries, and leave us to be generals for him." Murat, better informed, thought that the first blasts of the equinox had upset his enfeebled temperament, and that the activity of his genius was, as it were, enchained by his body, weighed down under the triple load of fatigue, fever, and a malady which, of all others, is perhaps that which the most subdues the moral and physical force of men. Those who have since wished to justify Napoleon for refusing to give his guard, have pretended that he waited till the Russian guard was engaged, and that he every instant demanded if they were so. But, independently of such a motive appearing absurd to professional men, it is positively denied by three historians (Labaume, Segur, and Chambray), and by Colonel Boutourlin, who affirm that the Russian guard took part in the action. "Kutusoff," says the first, "had caused his reserve to advance, to try a last stroke of fortune; *the imperial guard formed part of it.*" "Kutusoff," says Segur, "profited by the suspension he did not expect; he called to the aid of his left *all his reserves, and even the Russian guard.*" The latter also imputes to the emperor an answer which would imply a very different motive: "Daru, pressed by Dumas, and especially by Berthier, whispered to the emperor, that on all sides the cry was, that the moment had arrived for the guard to advance. But Napoleon answered: 'And should there be a second battle to-morrow, with what am I to fight it?' The minister no longer insisted, astonished to see the

emperor, for the first time, speak of the morrow, and adjourn his fortune.”* Finally, Segur, after too much vain circumlocution, finishes by saying, that “the best informed thought, at this distance, and at the head of an army of foreigners, which had no other bond of union but victory, a chosen body devoted to him appeared indispensable for his preservation.” This plainly denotes that, to save his person, Napoleon failed to win the victory, lavished the blood and compromised the safety of the army. If this is what Segur intended to say, we will not take on ourselves the responsibility of discussing so grave an assertion. It is for time to pronounce on this damnifying accusation brought against the memory of Napoleon; let us remember that he himself has said that the truth concerning the Russian campaign would never be known. He also said, from the depths of his exile, attesting the *manes* of his heroic companions, Murat, Ney, Poniatowski, “that the campaign of Russia is the most glorious, the most difficult, and the most honourable for the Gauls, of which ancient or modern history makes mention.” The tone in which he has written that passage goes to the heart; one is touched, overpowered by the image of that great and unfortunate man thus placing imperishably on record these brief but burning words to avenge the insult offered to his laurels. But when this affecting impression passes away, reflection brings back reproach and regret to this part of his history. Those readers for whom a little scepticism would here be too heavy a burden, and who desire a positive opinion, no matter at what price, on every thing, ought to search for the elements of this determination in a laborious study of all the documents. In this succinct statement, we have only wished to create some doubts between two opinions equally extreme; the

* Napoleon, from the depths of his exile, forcing himself to refute several severe criticisms on his military operations, particularly those on the Russian campaign, which formed the subject of the book by General Jomini, entitled *Considérations sur l'Art de la Guerre*, does not touch on this difficulty. Moreover, his defence of this expedition is by no means satisfactory.

one replete with blame, the other full of admiration. However, every thing henceforward becomes positive in the recital of the disasters of the French ; the terrible result is well known, and we must hasten our march over frightful ruins.

Murat, indefatigable and always insatiable of combat, again found the Russians occupying a height behind Mojaisk. Their attitude was firm and imposing as before the battle. Attacked without success, they continued their retreat as far as Moscow. Kutusoff, who had promised to defend this capital, collected under its walls 91,000 men, including 20,000 recruits and 6000 Cossacks. Napoleon remained three days at Mojaisk, consumed by a burning fever, and deprived of the use of speech by a violent cold. He recovered his voice to say to General Bessières, who was giving him a list of all the generals wounded at Moskwa, "Eight days of Moscow, and it will be forgotten." However, the inhabitants of that unfortunate capital, abandoned by Kutusoff, hastened to flee at the voice of Rostopchin ; he announced to them that the entire city was doomed to the flames. This resolution, worthy of a barbarous country, but worthy also of antique heroism, decided, as it is known, the fate of the whole expedition. In pausing before the spectacle of this immense sacrifice, history will always repeat the name of the man to whom the conception of it is attributed ; but what will she say when she sees that man himself, as if terrified at his own glory, disavowing the conflagration of Moscow ? Nevertheless, the disclaimer of Rostopchin, without changing the generally-formed opinion on this subject, has only served to raise doubts as to the stamp of his character. There are men who cannot support, for the rest of their lives, the consequences of a vigorous act which they were once capable of accomplishing. Napoleon, surrounded by flames in the Kremlin, had at length his eyes opened by their sinister glare. He foresaw all the results of that terrible event. He never afterwards spoke of the burning of Moscow but as he did of the capitulation of Baylen, that is to say, in accents of fury

and despair. "If the Russians," wrote he at St. Helena, "had gained the battle of Moskwa, their capital was safe: one hundred thousand Russians, men, women, and children, would not have died of misery in the woods, in the snows of the neighbourhood; Russia would not have seen annihilated in a week that superb capital, the work of centuries; she would not have lost thousands of millions engulfed in its ruins. Without the conflagration of Moscow, an event new in history, Alexander would have been compelled to make peace."

It is known that after having waited thirty-five days at Moscow for a letter and proposals from the Emperor Alexander, Napoleon determined to abandon his sterile conquest and the still smoking ruins of that capital. He quitted it, leaving Marshal Mortier to raze from its old foundations the palace of the Czars. However, winter, the most formidable ally of the Russians, had arrived. It appeared prompt and terrible, escorted by all the horrors of the north, and enveloped the retreat, or rather the flight and rout of the French army, with an unheard-of complication of disasters. Amid so many misfortunes, which the narrative of the new historian has reproduced in a manner so vivid and so successfully, the reader follows with agony the last struggles of the remnant of the French with the enemy; he expects each instant to see them succumb before the superior number and the thousand tortures which press upon them; and asks with astonishment, how the Russians could allow a complete and definite victory to escape from them, which so often was evidently and easily within their reach. One of the most distinguished actors in this war, having made the campaign with the Russians, states the same difficulty in the following terms: "No campaign can be cited in modern history, in which each adversary had such frequent opportunities of obtaining a certain victory, and of assuring, by attack, the total destruction of his enemy, without any risk to himself, and scarcely with any loss." The eye-witness who thus expresses himself—a man whose opinion ought to have great

weight in this matter—is General Sir Robert Wilson, who, forming part of the staff of Kutusoff, frequently condemned that old general for his indecisive tardiness. In his criticism on the military operations of 1812, whether on the side of the Russians or the French, he has distributed blame to both in nearly equal proportions.* Through want of energy, according to Wilson, in the direction of the movements of the Russian army, and a resolution not to make a general and concentrated attack on the line of the enemy's march, the French army would have regained its position on the Dwina and Dnieper without any serious loss, had it not entirely neglected to rough-shod the horses, so as to cross the ice: the horses of Napoleon alone were excepted from this want of foresight, and Napoleon owed his safety to the attention of Caulaincourt. Wilson reproaches the Russians for not having maintained themselves in their entrenched camp at Drissa, and, as the consequence, with having abandoned, without a battle, all the vast country between the Niemen and the Dnieper. He reproaches the French for having lost the opportunity of exterminating the Russian army after the battle of Smolensko, when its whole body was engaged, with its immense train of artillery, in narrow defiles. This was the fault of Junot, who lost, as Napoleon observed, the brightest day in his life; he might also have added, of his own. He reproaches them for having failed, on a similar occasion, in terminating the war by the most complete victory, when, after the capture of Moscow, the Russian armies wheeled round the smoking ruins of their capital to regain the Kalouga road, out of the line of

* But of all his assertions, the most extraordinary is contained in the following passage :—" In occupying," says he, " the lines of the Dwina and Dnieper, he (Napoleon) could at his pleasure have re-established Poland or not; either party was at his option; but his military march on Moscow, dictated solely by vanity, and by an ardent desire to eternise the glory of his conquest, is a military operation which still would not have been followed by any disaster, or even any *inconvenience*, if the political combinations of Buonaparte had not induced him to remain in that capital more than twenty days."

march, encumbered by obstacles of every description, and in a position which presented the flank of their columns to the concentrated French army. He affirms that after the battle of Malo-Jaroslavetz, so glorious for Prince Eugène and the army of Italy, if Napoleon had, on the second day, pushed forward his advanced guard, instead of making an oblique movement to regain Moscow and the road to Smolensko, the whole Russian army, conformably to the orders it had received, would have retired towards the Oka, and, abandoning a rich country, would have left to the French army an assured line of march in whatever direction it had pleased to return to Poland. He maintains that at Viasma the Russians might have ended the campaign with the French; but while Miloradowitch, at the head of a single body, encountered and defeated, with considerable advantage, three corps of the French army, the bulk of the Russian army was tranquilly bivouacking in the environs. At Krasnoe, still according to Wilson, the Russian army, 110,000 strong, with a formidable cavalry and artillery, ranged itself in battle array, and remained a quiet spectator of the movements of the French army, which defiled the whole length of its front during twenty-four hours, till at length the last ranks of its rear-guard had retired. However, that army was already in the most frightful disorder; the remnant of its cavalry was unable to quit the main road; what remained of its artillery was dragged by force of hand; the infantry wanted ammunition; and through the inclemency of the season and hunger, this unfortunate army was reduced to such a frightful state that even the Cossacks exclaimed, "Is it not horrible to see these skeletons thus rise from out their graves?" There were, in truth, partial engagements; and on the third day, Ney, ordered to protect the retreat, fought what Wilson calls the "battle of heroes," so furious was the attack, so intrepid the defence. It was after this combat that Ney, retracing his steps to escape the 80,000 Russians who were before and around him, led the remnants of his regiments across an unknown country, passed the Borysthènes

on the ice of the river, and rejoined Napoleon, who thought him lost. However, Kutusoff had already sent to Ney to induce him to surrender; and the whole of his army had taken up a position to arrest, on the following day, the French column, and cut off its retreat. Finally, at the Berezina, which seemed to be the fatal terminus of this retreat, Napoleon, reinforced by Oudinot, only found, according to Wilson, 18,000 men to stop his progress, under the orders of Tchitchakoff, who, in contravention of the orders he had received, had directed the greater part of his forces to another point. In fact, the passage, which was so deplorable, would have been effected without any misfortune, had not Wittgenstein been more ardent in the pursuit than the other chiefs. The remainder of the Russian grand army only arrived at the Berezina two days after the French columns had crossed it. General Wilson thinks that, on this occasion, as in all the preceding occasions, if the chiefs of the Russian army had had the skill or the boldness necessary to profit by all the advantages which they possessed,—of superior numbers, position, nature of the climate, situation of the French, and devotedness of their troops,—not a single man in the French army would have escaped death.* Let us add that, on this critical and disastrous occasion, Napoleon, by the admission even of his enemies, recovered all his military genius, which since Moscow seemed to have slept. “Invested on all sides,” says Boutourlin, “he deceived, by skilful demonstrations, the Russian generals opposed to him; and gliding, so to speak, between the armies ready to fall upon him, he executed his passage through a

* Boutourlin, who labours so hard to justify the slowness of old Marshal Kutusoff, and who at the same time undertakes the defence of Count Wittgenstein, absolutely abandons Admiral Tchitchakoff. “He manœuvred,” says Boutourlin, “with a tardiness which had a fatal influence on the whole of the operations.” He also admits that all the operations of the 16th—that is to say, the day after the French had effected the passage, afford just grounds of criticism against the Russian generals. “By dividing their forces,” says he, “on the two banks of the Berezina, they enervated their power.”

well-chosen point, where all the advantage of the ground was on his side. The bad state of the bridges, the amelioration of which did not depend on him, was the sole cause which, by retarding the operation, made it so perilous. Thus, the great losses the French experienced cannot be attributed to Napoleon, and ought only to be ascribed to the miserable circumstances in which his army was placed, and which it was not in his power to prevent."

We will not pursue the details of this disastrous retreat, the evils of which were increased by the want of resources, arising from an inexcusable absence of all forecast. We will not load our pages with the particulars of so many terrible misfortunes, which other writers have so minutely traced as to have left nothing additional to be recorded. Moreover, since destiny so willed it, it is a narrative which belongs rather to the history of France than to the history of Russia. But, returning to the sequel of facts or considerations which more particularly fall within our province, we ought to remark on the character which the Russian nation and sovereign displayed in this memorable struggle, and on its results to them. The Russians experienced losses equal to the French, either by battle or by climate; for in that unparalleled winter they were no more proof against its rigours than the French. However, their fortitude never failed; and Napoleon himself, in the memoirs published under his name, has done them justice most honourably.

As to the results, the advantage of this campaign to Russia was very great, if we compare it with what would have been the result had Napoleon succeeded. Its capital had been consumed with immense wealth; several of its provinces had been devastated with unexampled fury; more than 200,000 regular troops had perished: but a very solid compensation for these misfortunes, reparable by time and industry, remained; it was the development of the resources of the empire, and the electrifying of the spirit of the people. It also demonstrated that if Russia is not protected from invasion on account of distance, that if its armies may be conquered in spite of the courage and fanatical devotedness of her troops, she

remains invincible by the right of climate.* Napoleon did not correctly know his Russian catechism, and had been badly informed on points of deep importance—being particularly deceived as to the character of his illustrious adversary. The Emperor Alexander, by no means dazzled at the glitter of a military fortune hitherto so prodigious, opposed an unshaken firmness to his first reverses, resigned himself to learn how to conquer even through his defeats ; and took an oath, as a sovereign and a man, not to treat with Buonaparte so long as an armed enemy remained in his country. Napoleon, ready to quit Moscow, desired peace at any price, and for a last time sent Lauriston to Kutusoff, to obtain from that general a safe-conduct with which to proceed to St. Petersburg ; but this negotiation turned out badly ; the Russian generals, aware of the inflexible resolution of their master, only sought to gain time, in anticipation of the cold weather. Alexander joined his army at Wilna, and by his example encouraged his subjects to support privations, cold, and fatigue. His presence and affability kept up the enthusiasm of the Russian nation, much better than Napoleon, in the midst of so many misfortunes, could sustain that of his unfortunate soldiers. Alexander himself forwarded orders relative to the formation of hospitals ; engaged with indefatigable ardour in the re-organisation of regiments decomposed by the war ; and, in fact, diffused his conservative spirit in all parts of his vast empire. The nation, touched by so noble an example, by so paternal a solicitude, responded to the wishes of the sovereign by immense sacrifices. Voluntary contributions, in men and money, were furnished by the nobility ; the whole empire resounded with shouts of triumph, with hymns of gratitude ; and when the enemy had

* This is a truth which Napoleon himself recognised. “He spoke,” says Las Casas, “of the admirable situation of Russia against the rest of Europe, and the immensity of its invading masses. He painted that power seated under the Pole, backed by eternal ice, which, in need, rendered her unapproachable ; she was not attackable, he said, except during three or four months.”

entirely disappeared from the territory, it roused itself in turn to invade the country of its aggressor.

A swarm of Cossacks, loaded with immense booty, advanced as a torrent from the banks of the Don. Each day, among the reinforcements, arrived youths, old men,—all who could wield a lance. However, European diplomacy hastened to take advantage of the misfortunes of Napoleon; and his doubtful allies abandoned his fortune, struck with moral death at the same time in the north and in the south. The Prussian general York signed a convention of neutrality with the Russians; and this treason prevented Murat, to whom Napoleon had intrusted the remains of the grand army, from maintaining the line of the Niemen, and even guarding his positions beyond the Vistula. Poland was soon entirely evacuated; and Germany, where so many hatreds fermented, where so many hopes were raised, was again about to become the theatre of the war, brought back to it by the fortune of Russia, the audacity of Napoleon, and the too-servile devotion of the French to the glory of their chief. (1813.) In fact, Napoleon having obtained a new army from the baseness of the senate, strong and numerous, quitted the soil of astounded and exhausted France, to repair his disgrace by new combats. (March 1st.) A sixth coalition declared against him; by main force Russia snatched from him his ancient alliances, imposed its own on the king of Prussia; called on the Germans to shake off the yoke, by treating as slaves the princes who formed the Confederation of the Rhine; and in the month of March, 80,000 Russians and 40,000 Prussians passed the Elbe near to Wittemberg and Dresden, and occupied that last city.

Napoleon was at the head of an army of 250,000 men; but nearly one-fourth part of these troops was composed of Germans, Saxons, Westphalians, or Bavarians, whose feelings were, at least, doubtful: all the rest, drawn from France, were young and inexperienced; for the old soldiers had perished, and the cavalry, in particular, was weak. Victory, though a sanguinary one, crowned these new soldiers at Lutzen and Bautzen. (1st and 19th May.)

The result of these successes was the successive occupation of Dresden, Hamburg, and Breslau; finally, of the armistice of Plesswitz in Silesia. (June 4th.) The Russians took advantage of this truce to reinforce themselves with more than 60,000 good troops, who arrived from the south and the heart of Russia. The allies also flattered themselves with beholding all Germany rise at the first signal; and Holland, Switzerland, the Tyrol, Italy, with the whole south of Europe, concur, by simultaneous attacks, in the success of the coalition. Above all, they hoped to draw Austria into their plans, which only feebly continued in its neutrality, and in its character of arbitrator. In fact, Napoleon being unwilling even to address a conciliatory note to his father-in-law, Austria signed at Prague (27th July) an adhesion to the alliance of Russia and Prussia. A Congress was immediately opened in that city; and the Duke of Vicenza, who presented himself as the ambassador of Napoleon, was not admitted, on the plea of the insufficiency of his powers. This conduct of Austria deranged all former plans, and was a result which had escaped the sagacity of Napoleon, or which his pride had not allowed him to understand. He conquered at Dresden; and, as if his star had gained its first ascendancy, Moreau, who had abandoned America to measure his strength with him, perished by a French bullet in that memorable battle, where three sovereigns commanded in person. But this victory was incomplete; and the allies, as after the battle of Smolensko, hemmed in defiles from which they could not emerge, effected their retreat through the failure of the general order to seize the position through which they were compelled to retire. In this campaign, the greater part of the generals committed faults, as well as their master: Ney himself desiring, before the battle of Dresden, to seize Berlin, which was covered by the Swedo-Russian army, detached himself, with 70,000 men, from the rest of the French army, which retrograded upon Dresden, Napoleon being compelled to renounce his plan of invading Silesia.

Diplomatic manœuvres always went hand in hand with military

operations. The confederates always felt more keenly the necessity of riveting the bonds of their union, which alone could give them strength. Two new treaties,—the first between Austria, Russia, and Prussia (9th September); the second between Austria and Great Britain,—were signed at Tœplitz, in Bohemia, in the interval which elapsed between the battle of Dresden and that of Leipsic. (16th, 18th, 19th October.) It is known that the fate of that battle, which was preceded by several combats, was in great part decided by the infamous treason of General Wrede, who passed over to the enemy with his Bavarians and Wurtembergers, taking with him an artillery of more than seventy pieces of cannon. This unexpected event rather prevented the victory of the French than determined that of the enemy. However, Leipsic was carried on the following day, and the confederated sovereigns—that is to say, the emperor of Russia, the king of Prussia, and Bernadotte, the prince of Sweden,—entered it by three different gates. 20,000 prisoners, more than 13,000 sick and wounded, were the fruits of this victory to the enemy. But they paid for it, at least, by a vast effusion of blood, and hesitated for a moment between mourning and triumph. In this disastrous affair, which brought to the verge of the precipice the fortune of France and that of its chiefs, Napoleon is accused of having committed great faults, either through invincible pride or obstinate blindness. The first of these faults was allowing himself to be drawn by the enemy into an unfavourable position, having behind him marshy plains, intersected by canals almost without bridges—a position from which a retreating army was certain to be crushed. Thus the retreat of the French was most calamitous. A sudden panic, caused by the explosion of a bridge over which they were crossing the Elbe, and which a sergeant caused to be blown up before the proper time, was the cause of the troops precipitating themselves in disorder towards all the western outlets of the plain—that is to say, in the direction of France; and all who did not perish in the water fell into the hands of the enemy.

Napoleon, justifying in his memoirs the military strategies of Leipsic, imputes all the misfortunes of that battle partly to the defection of the Bavarians, and partly to the explosion of the bridge; he affirms that the French army was victorious on the 18th, in spite of the check sustained on the 16th by the Duke of Ragusa. "A treachery so unheard of," says he, speaking of the Bavarians, "was sure to entail ruin on the army, and give the allies all the honour of the day." However, at the end of the battle of the 18th, the enemy made a retrograde movement on the whole of its line, and bivouacked in the rear of the field of battle, which remained in possession of the French.*

The remains of the French army, united at Erfurt, were reorganised with sufficient rapidity to resist seventy thousand Austro-Bavarians who waited for them at Hanau. They were commanded by Wrede (30 October), who hoped to throw some little glory over the shame of his defection. The old guard, commanded by Curial, crushed him; he lost twelve thousand men, and was himself wounded. The result of these events is known. All the strong places in Germany, garrisoned by French troops, fell successively into the hands of the enemy. Holland was evacuated, and the allies advanced to the banks of the Rhine. In the south, fortune equally abandoned the French banners; the Peninsula was entirely evacuated, and Marshal Soult, forced to retreat before Wellington, had crossed the Bidassoa. In this state of things, the confederated sovereigns announced, in a declaration from Frankfort, that they did not wage war against France, but against Napoleon; that they wished France to be strong, prosperous, and more powerful than under her ancient kings.

At the end of December, six divisions of the enemy, one hundred and twenty thousand strong, and commanded by Prince Schwartzenburg, passed the Rhine between Basle and Schaffhausen. Too confident in the rampart of Helvetic neutrality, Napoleon had never thought of guarding the frontiers of the empire

* *Mémoires écrits à Sainte Hélène*, t. 11.

on that side ; and not only were the degenerate sons of Tell not indignant at this violation of their territory, but they had even invited it, and bargained for the price of their baseness. The army of Silesia, under the orders of Blucher, at the same time effected its passage between Manheim and Coblentz. The foreigner poured through the gates of France, bringing with his resentment all the horrors of invasion.

We shall not enter into the details of the events of the memorable campaign of 1814, which reinstated the *great man* in all his military superiority, and which will for ever constitute the honour of the French arms, although the most infamous treason rendered abortive the fruits of so much genius on the part of the chief, and so much patriotism and courage on the part of the soldiers.* The manœuvres of Napoleon were so prompt, so skilful, and his victories at Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamp, so decisive, that if every Frenchman had done his duty (observes General Wilson), they would have thrown the allied army, then reduced to one hundred and twenty thousand men, with their sovereigns at their head, between the city of Paris and the cannon of the French army, without any line of communication with the Rhine, without intermediary magazines, without ammunition, without any other provisions than those which accompanied the army on its march. In twenty days the emperor had beaten in succession all the divisions of the Silesian army, and had thrown them between the Marne and the Aisne ; and Blucher would have lost all his army, had not Wintzingerode, hastening from Belgium, rescued it from Napoleon. Then the latter, leaving Marshals Mortier and Marmont in front of the Russians and Prussians, marched with

* Here every attentive reader will readily understand how feeble the word “ courage ” is, after having been so often repeated, when applied to these last and magnanimous efforts of Napoleon and the grand army. They were truly great, and worthy of all respect, for they fought to defend the independence of their territory. Then heaven ought to have granted them victory ; but inexorable heaven only dazzled their eyes with it, and suddenly placed between them and their salvation an abyss of perfidy.

Victor, Oudinot, and Macdonald, himself leading the old and young guards against the flank of the enemy, quartered along the right bank of the Seine. The allies were in a position from which it was impossible for them to retire; a powerful hand—a hand to which fortune had restored all its force—had surrounded them with the imperious circle of Popilius; and, forced to a retreat which they could not have effected, they must have been prisoners in the midst of their conquest, had not treason come to their aid. The army which had obtained such glorious success advanced against them in full confidence. It was fifty thousand strong, as several corps arriving from Spain had joined it; none doubted of victory: it is by the certain conviction of such a result that we can appreciate the defection which caused its failure.

However, negotiations commenced at Chatillon at the moment when Napoleon was beaten at Rothière, and were followed up with equal bad faith on both sides. Both parties sought to gain time, in the hope of profiting by the chapter of accidents and the right of victory; but although that right ultimately remained with Napoleon, the conditions then proposed were much less acceptable than those of the treaty of Frankfort, which seemed to have been intended as the basis of the meeting at Chatillon. There was even a moment, after the battle of Montmirail, when the Emperor Alexander wished to treat with the French negotiator, the Duke of Vicenza, at any price. If, then, the dispositions of the allies, in spite of the multiplied victories of Napoleon, underwent so extraordinary a change, it arose from their calculating on mysterious auxiliaries. However, the mystery is to this day completely veiled; and if contemporaneous history cannot yet state the whole truth, it may refer it, in this respect, to the indignant memory of the reader.

The confederated sovereigns demanded “that Napoleon should renounce all the acquisitions made by France since the commencement of 1792, and all constitutional influence beyond her ancient limits.” Such was the first and principal clause ex-

pressed in the new draft of the treaty. Napoleon rejected it with indignation ; and his refusal of peace was then as magnanimous as it had previously been unreasonable and proud. However, negotiations were protracted through the influence of Austria, which was unwilling to see the sovereign, husband of an archduchess, ruined or too humiliated.

Military operations were followed up with activity : at Nangis, at Montereau, at Mery-sur-Seine, the French beat the enemy, and, pursuing them to Troyes, forced them to evacuate that town, which they occupied in their turn. However, a prince of the house of Bourbon was already on the soil of France ; and Napoleon adopted vain and tardy measures to repress the ancient affections awakened by his presence. Napoleon could not bring the Austrian Prince Schwartzenburg to an engagement, as he desired ; he was forced to parcel out his army to cover the different roads to the capital, which the enemy, much more numerous, menaced. Thus, of all the combats which he or his marshals sustained, none had any decisive result ; and partial successes were equal to defeats. The battles of Bar and Ferté-sur-Aube, where Marshal Oudinot allowed himself to be surprised ; and even the battle of Craone, where Napoleon commanded in person, having with him Ney, Victor, and Mortier, only caused a loss of men more onerous to the French than to the enemy. The emperor attacked without success the army of Laon, which served as an *entrepôt* for the allied armies ; and Marshal Marmont, who marched to reinforce him, allowed himself to be surprised during the night, and lost three thousand prisoners, with all his artillery. Five days before, the town of Soissons, prematurely surrendered by capitulation, became a point of communication and a common support for the army of the allies, called the army of the North, and that of Silesia, commanded by Blucher ; so that the Prussian general, finding the roads open before him, could advance upon Paris with a force of about one hundred thousand men. Whilst these different events thus inclined the balance in favour of the confede-

rates, the sovereigns renewed and consolidated, for the third time, the offensive and defensive alliance against France. The treaty of Chaumont reciprocally bound the different powers to pursue, without relaxation, the war against France, in case she did not definitively accept the proposals tendered to her. They could not be accepted.

Napoleon wrote to the emperor of Austria; but his letter manifested much less his desire of peace than his hope of detaching his father-in-law from the cause of his enemies. A few days afterwards, the congress of Chatillon was broken up, and the entrance of the Duke of Angoulême into Bordeaux was known at Paris. The Count of Artois had already arrived at Vesoul. The presence of these princes resuscitated a powerful party, and the most dangerous enemies of the emperor were in the heart of the capital.

After the glorious battle of Arcis-sur-Aube, Napoleon again manœuvred with great ability to draw the enemy far from Paris, directing his march to the upper Marne, as though he persisted in his project of cutting off their communications with the Rhine; but then he was too weak, especially in cavalry. The enemy were not the dupes of this tardy stratagem; they knew the strength of the emperor as well as himself, and better than he did the feeble efforts made for the defence of Paris.* Leaving, then, the emperor to wait for them on the upper Marne, and rid of Mortier and Marmont, who received an order to quit the banks of the Aisne to join the emperor, Blucher and Bulow marched on the capital. The Marshals Mortier and Marmont, encountered at Fere Champenoise by a numerous body of the army of Silesia, could not join the emperor; but, on the contrary, were beaten and thrown back on Paris. Napoleon, pursued, harassed by ten thousand Russian cavalry, arrived at St. Dizier, thinking to draw the enemy on his track, where he learned that the whole mass of the allied forces were under the walls of Paris.

* Beauchamp: *Histoire de la Campagne de 1814.*

He thought of retrograding ; but that false speculation decided the fate of the campaign. Paris, after a defence of a few hours, capitulated. The French dared not to sacrifice Paris, although the example of Moscow was before their eyes. They saved a metropolis, and lost an empire. They lost much more ; for who can say what France would have been at this day, if, by a magnanimous sacrifice, Paris had only been considered in the light of any other town destined to undergo all the consequences of such a war ? But among the moderns, the *house* kills the man, so comfortable does he find himself in it ; there are tradesmen *now*, not citizens. “ At the sight of the enemy, the rich thought of capitulating, the poor of fighting ; the workmen demanded arms, but could obtain none.”* In spite of the rapidity of his march, Napoleon could not arrive in time to intervene in a treaty which so many men powerful in intrigues had an interest to conclude with the greatest promptitude. The Duke of Vicenza, sent to Paris to see if there was still time to suspend that fatal capitulation, despatched a courier to the emperor, to inform him that it was concluded. At this news, Napoleon immediately ordered his carriage to return, and he alighted from it at Fontainebleau. The man, full of soul and talent, who has so ably traced the history of the campaign of 1814, borrowing the words of Montesquieu, exclaims with reason, “ It is here that we may contemplate the spectacle of human affairs ; that we may behold so many wars undertaken, so much blood spilt, so many people destroyed, so many great actions, so many triumphs of policy, constancy, and courage : what is the upshot of them all ?”

The events connected with this grand catastrophe, such as the deplorable defection of Murat and the heroic conduct of Prince Eugene, the abdication of Napoleon and the dispersion of the imperial family, are entirely beyond our province ; and we have only to throw a glance at the attitude assumed by Russia in the midst

* Manuscrit de 1814.

of this victorious coalition, and in the distribution of those great political results to which she principally contributed.

The capitulation of Paris having been signed at two o'clock in the morning by Marshals Mortier and Marmont, the emperor of Russia, the king of Prussia, and the generalissimo, Prince Schwartzburg, entered Paris about the middle of the same day.

A particular declaration of the Emperor Alexander, published immediately after his entry into the capital, confirmed the pacific assurances already expressed on the preceding day in the proclamation of the generalissimo of the allied troops; adding to it, however, that the confederated sovereigns *would no longer treat with Napoleon, nor with any member of his family*. They had not expressed themselves so emphatically on the preceding day, but now the capitulation was signed; moreover, events had passed in this interval, of which the author of the *Manuscript of 1814** gives the following account: "On the 31st, at noon, the Emperor Alexander and the king of Prussia had made their entry. This military procession, at first tranquil, finished by becoming noisy; shouts in favour of the Bourbons were heard; white cockades were displayed; and the astonished Parisians, seeking the emperor of Austria with their eyes, learned with inquietude that he was not there. The Emperor Alexander alighted at the residence of Talleyrand. This veteran minister ought to have followed the empress to the Loire; such were his orders; but he caused himself to be arrested at the barrier and brought back to Paris, that he might pay all the honours to the allies. Scarcely had the Czar installed himself in his apartment, than he held a council on the political conduct the allies were to adopt. Talleyrand and his principal confidants were summoned to the deliberation. Vainly did the Duke of Vicenza present himself to obtain the audience which had been promised to him; the cause of his prince was already lost, and he could not make himself

* Baron Fain.

heard. However, the public were soon informed of the proceedings. Nesselrode had already written to the prefect of police to restore to liberty all persons detained for attachment to their legitimate sovereign; and soon afterwards the walls of Paris were placarded with a declaration of the Emperor Alexander's, stating "that he would not treat of the interests of France with Napoleon, nor any member of his family." The Duke of Vicenza had vainly pleaded the cause, not only of his master, but also that of the Empress Maria Louisa and her son. The allied sovereigns refused all negotiation, because the proposals offered were not such as the powers had a right to expect, especially after the strong manifestation of feeling in Paris and throughout all France. By the treaty of Paris of the 30th of May following, the limits of France were re-established such as they existed on the 1st of January, 1792.

The Emperor Alexander, having obtained his end, went to England to see a country so worthy his attention. On going to Guildhall, he was obliged to stop to hear homage paid to the maritime supremacy of the English, "Rule Britannia;" which was certainly not very courteous (observes General Wilson) in presence of a crowned host who had eighty ships of the line, and a great maritime ambition. Many other things displeased him in this admirable and free country. However, he quitted it, according to the testimony of Wilson, with a great respect for the people who inhabit it, and for the institutions which constitute their glory and strength.

On his return to the continent, Alexander actively occupied himself in repairing the losses caused by such great success. He reorganised those divisions of the troops which had suffered most in the campaign; re-equipped, even augmented his army; and so judicious were his pains, that in the following year he could have brought into the field 300,000 men and 2000 pieces of cannon, with all their equipage,—an immense proof of the activity of his arsenals.

His senate decreed him the title of the "Happy;" and would

probably have conferred upon him much greater honours, if the austere modesty of that monarch had not repulsed such homage. His education, and more particularly his natural sagacity, had taught him that all these titles, all these honours, which are but the gilding of power, add nothing real to his strength. He had even only accepted the English order of the Garter from courtesy, and on the condition that one of the orders of his empire should be accepted in return.

Russia had manifested some discontent at his long absence, but the murmur was soon appeased; and Alexander appeared at the congress at Vienna towering above all the other monarchs with an elevation which France had lost in this revolution.

The Congress of Vienna, opened by virtue of the thirty-second article of the treaty of Paris on the 30th of May, was to decide on the fate of the vast fragments of the monarchy of Napoleon, which remained around ancient France. The dominions of his allies who had fallen with him might well be considered fragments of his empire. The fate of Saxony was first discussed with great warmth. Prussia desired to swallow it up; and Russia had the tact so to conduct herself as not to look with an unfavourable eye on this pretension; but finally, the rights and independence of the kingdom of Saxony having found in the bosom of the British Parliament vigorous defenders, the Saxon monarchy was preserved by a sort of provisional agreement. Poland gave rise to more serious negotiations. Among other projects, England was reproached with having proposed a more equal partition, so as to extinguish even the hope of its re-establishment. Alexander, excited by the Poles themselves, as well as by his general views, demanded the crown, and promised a constitutional government. It is known what became of that government in 1825. Naples demanded the ratification of its treaties made in the name of Joachim. France and Sicily opposed them. Russia was willing to sacrifice Murat, in order that France might lend herself to his arrangements in Poland. Prussia had a good understanding with

Murat; she remembered all he had done at Tilsit; but circumstances imposed on her the most passive neutrality. Austria, forgetful of the obligations she had contracted by her engagements and by the services she had received, hesitated, in the hope of acquiring Naples for herself. Finally, England inclined the balance in favour of this last power, through its hatred of the family of Napoleon.

The political arrangements, these divisions and distributions of *souls*, were not yet concluded in congress, and the victors were still enjoying the festivals of victory, when Napoleon, escaping from the island of Elba, landed in a few hours in the Gulf of Jouan. The infraction of the treaty which limited to the possession and habitation of that small island the ancient ruler of Europe, was immediately denounced as a crime equally violating divine and human laws; and the declaration of the powers confederated at the Congress of Vienna pronounced against him a decree almost amounting to outlawry. “Buonaparte,” said they, “has just destroyed the only legal title on which his existence hinges; he has placed himself without the pale of civil and social relations, and has devoted himself to public punishment.” The Emperor Alexander promptly put his armies in motion; but if Napoleon had made his attempt some months later, perhaps the Russian sovereign would not have been a party to this new raising of bucklers. Discord already penetrated the councils of the allies; and in completing the spoliation of territory and the traffic of souls, in which they made mutual concessions to each other, the cabinets were disposed to resume, with their ancient hatreds, their particular system of policy. Austria, France, and England were united, by a secret convention, against Russia and Prussia; divisions announced themselves, even broke out, at the Congress of Vienna. A few months later, only a few months, Napoleon would not have had to fight against a confederacy. The Russian troops arrived too late to take part in the military operations of a campaign of a few days; but the Emperor Alexander, neverthe-

less, made his second appearance at Paris, surrounded by the most imposing military pomp.

Alexander alone, among the allied sovereigns, exerted himself to moderate the rigours of conquest. He concluded with the emperor of Austria and the king of Prussia the famous treaty of the Holy Alliance, which has since governed Europe. The august contracting parties attempted to impress on that treaty a divine sanction, by invoking God the Father and his Divine Son Jesus Christ our Saviour ; a seal of immutability which Providence unfortunately refuses to all things human, even when they are the work of kings. However, what is remarkable in this famous treaty is, that England was not a party to it.

Alexander having accomplished all his plans, and established, by his attitude in the midst of these events, a superiority that the other powers could not dispute with him, quitted France to renew his armies, visited Prussia, received the homage of Poland, and returned to his capital. The glory acquired by the Russian name, and the immense power that the monarch added to his sceptre, excited the warmest feelings in a nobility enamoured of autocracy, proud of national fame, and jealous for national aggrandisement. Alexander fulfilled these desires ; and followed up the extension of his power by alliances and marriages,—another mode of making war and satisfying ambition with which princes may occupy their leisure. A princess of his family was placed on the throne of Holland. The waters of the Texel and Scheldt became an immense resource for navigation, by offering to the Russian fleets winter quarters which are not blocked up with ice, as in the Baltic. Moreover, in reference to Russia, Holland is an advanced post capable of holding France in respect, and restraining Prussia. In reference to England, she is at once a sword and a buckler. Another Russian princess, the Grand Duchess Catherine, ascended the throne of Wurtemberg ; and this alliance considerably extended the influence of Russia in Germany, in which country she was already dominant in Weimar, Baden,

and Oldenburg. Finally, sentiments of personal as well as of political affection formed the alliance, so justly celebrated at St. Petersburg, with the Princess of Prussia. Such was, after 1815, the state of the relations of Russia with continental Europe.

REIGN OF ALEXANDER THE FIRST.

Alexander was born on the 13th December, 1777, and became emperor and autocrat of all the Russias on the 24th March, 1801. His earliest education was superintended by his grandmother, the Empress Catherine II. When he had reached an age at which it was necessary to remove him from the guardianship of women, Nicolas Laitytroff was appointed his governor, a man of polity and intelligence, and whose mind was imbued with the spirit of progress. The tutor to the young prince was Cæsar La Harpe, a native of the Pays du Vaud, whose principles were known to be republican. His mental training was severe and disciplined. By the express command of Catherine, poetry and music were excluded from his studies; but he was instructed in history, experimental philosophy, and botany. In due season, this system of tuition bore its fruits; and for the first time in the history of Russia the autocrat was a Liberal.

Catherine, aware of the impure character of the court of St. Petersburg, determined on the early marriage of her eldest grandson, and selected as the future empress of Russia, Louisa Maria Augusta, daughter of Charles Louis, hereditary prince of Baden. He had two other daughters; the one became queen of Bavaria, the other of Sweden. The marriage of Alexander was celebrated on the 9th of October, 1793, he being sixteen years of age. The princess was scarcely fifteen, having been born in 1779. According to Russian usage, the young empress embraced the Greek religion, and took the name of Elizabeth Alexeiwena. Two daughters were the issue of these nuptials, who both died in early life.

“Alexander came to the throne,” says Sir Robert Wilson,

“with strong predilections in his favour. Real personal good qualities had gained the affection of all who approached him ; and as the pupil of La Harpe, expectation was raised high as to his capacity for government. The Telemachus of the North was not then inebriated with power ; but, instructed in his duties by Mentor, endowed with intelligence and virtue, exercised the authority of a despotic sovereign to establish philanthropy as the basis of his throne. An enemy to the costly vanities of some of his predecessors, he regulated the expenses of his palaces with economy, and applied his treasures to the foundation of useful establishments,—the promotion of useful public works,—the equipment of his arsenals, and the augmentation of his army. Temperate, active, and indefatigable, he transacted the business of government through direct correspondence or personal superintendence ; and, familiar with the statistics, topography, and interests of the various people inhabiting his extensive empire, he cherished the general prosperity by a polity adapted to the wants of each and all.” *

The reign of an autocrat is rather personal than national. He alone rules, and the subjects have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them. Hence the history of Russia necessarily becomes, in an unusual degree, the biography of the reigning Czar, whose will is absolute, and uncontrolled either by aristocratic influence or popular representation. In such a country, public opinion resolves itself into imperial individuality ; and the chief duty of the annalist is to paint as faithfully as possible the personal character of the monarch, as manifested by his actions, and as described by those who had familiar access to his society. In recording the narrative of events which occur under an absolute government, in which party-spirit is voiceless, and no sound is heard but the clank of fetters, that narrative must receive its colouring from autocracy.

At the commencement of his reign, Alexander devoted his

* Sketch of the Military and Political Power of Russia. By Sir Robert Wilson.

time and thoughts to the interior improvement of his empire. He was diligent in business, and felt the responsibility of his position. He required from his ministers detailed reports of what transpired in their several departments. Many of the cruel and vexatious edicts of his father Paul, his humanity prompted him to abolish. He attempted to reform the administration of justice, and re-established a commission appointed by Catherine II. to frame a code. Torture and the confiscation of hereditary property were forbidden. Universities and schools were founded; several regulations favourable to commerce were introduced. Attempts were made to mitigate the horrors of serfage; and, to that end, landowners were permitted to sell a portion of their estates to their bondsmen, on condition that they also received their personal liberty. Storch relates the following incident in the life of Alexander, which strongly shows his detestation of slavery. A nobleman, who enjoyed his private friendship, requested the emperor to give him an estate and its serfs as hereditary possessions. "The peasants of Russia," replied the Czar, "are for the most part slaves. I need not expatiate upon the degradation or the misfortune of such a condition. Accordingly, I have made a vow not to augment the number; and I have laid it down as a principle, that I will not give the peasants away as property." Of the sincerity of the feelings he then entertained he gave proof in 1802, when he commenced the emancipation of the serfs of Esthonia, which he completed in 1816, and of those of Courland in 1817. In 1819, in answer to the Livonian nobility, who submitted to him a plan for the manumission of their serfs, he made the following statement: "I am delighted to see that the nobility of Livonia have fulfilled my expectations. You have set an example that ought to be imitated. You have acted in the spirit of our age, and have felt that liberal principles alone can form the basis of the people's happiness."

These were noble sentiments; but, unfortunately for his fame, he spoke a different language to the serfs, who had saved his throne.

At the French invasion he expressed his determination to retire to Siberia rather than ask peace from Napoleon, and called on all classes of his subjects to defend their fatherland. In a speech delivered in the Kremlin before the enemy had entered Moscow, he promised liberal institutions to those who would fight in defence of the throne to the last extremity ; and the serfs, fired by patriotism and the hope of future independence, responded to the appeal. When the French had retreated to Germany, and the Russian militia, composed of bondsmen, had returned to their homes, they expected and demanded performance of the imperial promise. Then appeared the infamous ukase of the 10th March, 1813, in which the Czar reviled the heroic peasants, proclaiming that “ as the peasant-serfs constitute the lowest class of the inhabitants of Russia, and do not enjoy any privileges, they cannot be deprived either of honour or good name.” Such was the cruel, ungrateful, and insulting answer to those men who had stood firm before the legions and chivalry of France at the Borodino and the Moskowa, not indeed in gilded uniforms, but in undressed sheepskins. Nor was this the only contradiction of Alexander’s liberalism towards the enslaved. While he was parading his generous principles at Paris and London, after the downfall of Napoleon, he determined on establishing military colonies, and transforming the provincial governments into military divisions. But, the peasants, thus attacked in their last entrenchment, revolted. Their villages were assaulted, and carried by the bayonet. Infuriated by imperial cruelty, the serfs who escaped grapeshot and shells cut the throats of their children, and liberated themselves from slavery by suicide. The prisoners were whipped to death by order of the Czar.

Schnitzler has mentioned two incidents in the life of Alexander, shortly after his accession to the throne, which deserve to be commemorated, as showing the elevation and rectitude of his principles before they were corrupted by the long exercise of unlimited power. “ In 1802, the nobility of one of his governments sent

him a deputation, praying him to honour with his presence a fête which they desired to give him. Having ascertained that the invitations were exclusively addressed to the nobility, the liberal monarch expressed his dissatisfaction, abstained from appearing at the fête, and on the same day gave a grand ball, at which were assembled all the principal inhabitants of the town without distinction of class, and he danced with ladies chosen both from the burgesses and the nobles." The other incident is equally honourable to his character as an autocrat, for he acknowledged the supremacy of the law. "In 1803, a Princess Galitzin presumed to appeal to him to protect her husband against the just demands of his creditors, intimating that the emperor himself was above the law." We quote his answer in his own words: "I do not wish, madame, to place myself above the laws, even if I could; for in all the world I do not recognise that authority as legitimate which does not flow from the laws. On the contrary, I feel more than any body the obligation of watching their observance; and even in cases where others may be indulged, I can only be severe."

The military renown of Russia was raised to the highest pinnacle of glory under the reign of Alexander. Signal defeats, far from depressing his courage, invigorated his fortitude; and his empire was saved by the heroic sacrifice of Moscow. When Napoleon entered the other capitals of Europe, he conquered; in the old capital of Russia he found his political grave. When intelligence reached the Czar of the entrance of the French army into Smolensko, he addressed a letter to Marshal Soltikoff, in which he said, "I will never lay down my arms while a single foreigner remains on the territory of my empire. Should St. Petersburg be taken, I will retire into Siberia. I will then resume our ancient customs; and, like our long-bearded ancestors, will return anew to conquer the empire." When Bernadotte, then Crown Prince of Sweden, heard of this magnanimity, he exclaimed, "This resolution will liberate Europe." His proclamation at Warsaw, 22d February, 1813, was a manly appeal to the dis-

pirited monarchs who had succumbed to the genius of Napoleon, and to the people they ruled, but could not protect. "Fear may still possess your sovereigns," said Alexander, "but let not a disastrous obedience restrain you. Equally unfortunate with yourselves, they abhor the power they dread; and they will in the end applaud the generous efforts which shall accomplish your happiness and their liberty. If, yielding to pusillanimity, the sovereigns persist in this fatal submission, the voices of their subjects must make themselves heard; and the princes who suffer their subjects to live in opprobrium and misery, must be goaded by them to vengeance and glory."

What precise share of glory is due to a king who accompanies his army to the field, to his commander-in-chief, to his officers or the main body of the soldiers, it were impossible to decide; but military writers pay high homage to the personal qualities of Alexander. "To the Emperor Alexander," says Bourtourlin, "principally belongs the glory of that memorable campaign. Those who have meditated upon the great lessons which history presents, know that in all important events one discovers a principal and dominating cause, whose decisive influence is felt throughout the progress of affairs. Accidental and accessory causes may hasten or retard the development; but they cannot change it, for it is always regulated in the last result by the principal cause. The events of 1812 had for their principal cause the bold and magnanimous resolution of the Emperor Alexander, to continue the war to the last extremity, without being intimidated by reverses however great, or seduced by the propositions of the enemy, however advantageous." This eulogy is confirmed by the judgment of Sir Robert Wilson: "Alexander, during this crisis, had displayed a degree of firmness which deranged all the calculations of Napoleon and his coadjutors. He pledged himself, as a sovereign and a man, that he would never treat with Napoleon whilst there was an armed enemy in his country; and his inflexible firmness rendered nugatory those attempts at negotiation, which are reported not to have re-

ceived the same discouragement in other quarters." Alexander was affable, approachable, and a sincere friend. He disliked the stiffness of formality, and could unbend without any sacrifice of dignity. Gracious in speech, he knew the art of paying delicate compliments. After the capitulation of Paris, he said to the Parisians, "If I arrive late, accuse only French valour;" and when Madame de Staël complimented the Czar by saying that "his people, without a constitution, were blessed with such a sovereign," he made this happy answer, "I am but a fortunate accident." But the apparent frankness and candour of the emperor concealed subtlety; and in the *Memorial of St. Helena*, Napoleon described him as "a Greek of the Lower Empire." The judgment of the French ruler, who knew the Czar well, is too valuable to be abridged: "He possesses abilities, grace, and information; he is fascinating, but one cannot trust him; he is not sincere, but a true Greek of the Lower Empire. He is, or pretends to be, a metaphysician; his faults are those of his education or of his preceptor. What discussions have I not had with him! He maintained that hereditary right was an abuse; and I had to expend all my eloquence and logic during a full hour to prove that hereditary right maintains the repose and happiness of nations. Perhaps he wished to mystify me; for he is cunning, false, and skilful. He may effect much. If I die here, he will be my successor in Europe. I alone could have stopped the deluge of his Tatars. The danger is great and permanent for the Continent, more especially for Constantinople: he coveted it much, and would have cajoled me on the subject; but I always turned a deaf ear. That empire, impaired as it is, formed the point of separation; it was the marsh which prevented my flank being turned." In 1808, Alexander said to Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, "I must needs have the key that opens the gate of my house." That key was Constantinople. The ambition of the Czar was not greater than that of Napoleon, and in craft they were well matched. Both suspected each other when they secretly conspired to divide Europe beneath their respective

sceptres. The treaty of Tilsit shows their mutual cupidity. It was concluded on the 7th of July, 1807, and put an end to the war between France and Russia. It was followed by a compact between the two empires, and the eighth article states: "If, in consequence of the recent changes which have taken place at Constantinople (the deposition of Selim III. replaced by Mustapha), the Porte shall not accept the mediation of France; or if, having accepted it, it shall happen, during the course of three months, the negotiations are not brought to a satisfactory conclusion, France will make common cause with Russia against the Ottoman Porte, and the two high contracting powers will concert measures to withdraw all the provinces of the Ottoman Empire in Europe (Constantinople and the province of Roumelia excepted) from the yoke and vexations of the Turk." However, the contingency did not arise, for the Ottoman Court did not refuse the mediation of France, and the proposed partition was subordinate to that hypothesis; nevertheless, Napoleon was just as guilty as Alexander in entertaining this dismembering policy, and the censure he pronounces on his brother conspirator recoils on himself.

The secret treaty concluded at Tilsit between the two emperors contains the following articles, in which their grasping ambition, and insolent defiance of the rights and laws of nations, is too apparent to require any comment:—1st. Russia shall take possession of European Turkey, and shall extend her conquests into Asia so far as she may deem proper. 2d. The Bourbon dynasty in Spain, and the House of Braganza in Portugal, shall cease to reign. Princes of the Buonaparte family shall succeed to both crowns. 3d. The territorial supremacy of the Pope shall cease. Rome and her dependencies shall be reunited to the kingdom of Italy. 4th. Russia shall afford France the assistance of her navy to re-conquer Gibraltar. 5th. France shall take possession of such cities in Africa as Tunis and Algiers; and at the general peace, all the conquests made by France in Africa shall be given as indemnities to the kings of Sardinia and Sicily. 6th. Malta shall be held by France,

and no peace made with England till she surrenders that island. 7th. The French shall occupy Egypt. 8th. The navigation of the Mediterranean Sea shall be confined exclusively to French, Russian, Spanish, and Italian vessels. 9th. Denmark shall have as an indemnity in the north of Europe the Hanseatic towns, provided she surrender her squadron to France. 10th. Their majesties the emperors of France and Russia shall draw up regulations by which no power shall navigate merchant ships, unless possessed of a certain number of vessels of war. Could this treaty have been executed, Europe would have been divided into two empires, and the rule of despotism would have been complete, while Napoleon would have had the lion's share of the spoil ; but he would not surrender Constantinople to the "true Greek of the Lower Empire," and the conspiracy against human freedom failed. If the prisoner of St. Helena has faithfully portrayed the Czar, surely he has painted his own character in colours of as black a dye. Had France received the city of the Sultan as her prey, Napoleon would probably have eulogised the disinterestedness of Alexander, however much he might have laughed at his simplicity.

Viscount de Ferronays, who was French ambassador at St. Petersburg, has also depicted Alexander in a letter dated 19th of May, 1823, addressed by him to Viscount de Chateaubriand, at that time minister for foreign affairs. This portraiture aims at minute discrimination, and appears to be the result of long and careful study. "It becomes every day more and more difficult to comprehend the character of the emperor. I do not believe it possible that any man can talk the language of probity and sincerity better than himself ; a conversation with him always leaves a favourable impression ; you quit him persuaded that he is a prince who unites to the finest qualities of a gentleman all those of a great sovereign, of a man of profound experience, gifted with the greatest energy. He reasons wonderfully well ; he pushes his argument ; he explains himself with eloquence, and with the warmth of one who is earnest and sincere. Well, after all this experience, the

events of his life, what I see every day, warn you not to rely too much upon him. Multiplied instances of acts of weakness prove to you that the energy he throws into his words does not exist in his character; and yet, on the other hand, the same weak character may be seized all at once with a fit of energy and excitement—a paroxysm—that may suffice to bring him instantly to determinations the most violent, the consequences of which may be incalculable. Besides, he is rather jealous of us; he cannot reconcile himself to the fact that Paris is the capital of Europe, and that St. Petersburg is only a pompous aggregation of structures raised upon a swamp, which no one cares to visit, and whence its inhabitants are glad to escape to any distance as often as they can. The emperor, in fact, is excessively suspicious—a proof of weakness; and this failing is a misfortune so much the greater, as this prince is to the full extent of his word (at least I believe so) the most honest man I know. He will, perhaps, often do wrong, but it is ever his desire to do right.”

Perhaps the judgment of Viscount de Ferronays might have carried more weight, had he abstained from his irrelevant and egotistical allusions to Paris and St. Petersburg, for in this respect he is guilty of the weakness he reproves. Chateaubriand had said of Alexander, “Sincere as a man in all that concerned humanity, he was cunning as a demi-Greek of the Lower Empire,” thus adopting the language of Napoleon; but on his return to Paris after the Congress of Verona, he changed this disparaging opinion for one of panegyric. Addressing the French Chamber of Deputies, he said, “I ought to state that I went to the Congress of Verona strongly prejudiced against the emperor of Russia. As a sincere friend of public liberty and of the independence of nations, I had been influenced by the calumnies repeated from day to day. What did I behold at Verona? Princes full of moderation and justice; kings who were honest men, and whom their subjects would have selected as their private friends, had they not been their masters. I committed to writing the sentiments expressed

by a prince whose magnanimity was praised by my honourable opponents, and whose favour was sought by them at a former epoch." Chateaubriand then proceeded to narrate a conversation that passed between himself and the Czar, and records the following speech. "I am very happy," said the emperor to me, "that you came to Verona, because you may now bear witness to truth. Would you have believed, as our enemies are so fond of asserting, that the alliance is only a word intended to cover ambition? That might have received a colour of truth under the old order of things, but now all private interests disappear when the civilisation of the world is imperilled. Henceforward there can be no English, French, Russian, Prussian, or Austrian policy; there can only be a general policy, involving the salvation of all, admitted in common by kings and peoples. It is for me, the first of all, to declare my appreciation of the principles on which I founded the Holy Alliance. An opportunity presents itself; it is the Greek insurrection. Certainly no event appeared more adapted to my personal interests, to those of my subjects, and to the feelings or prejudices of the Russians, than a religious war against Turkey; but in the troubles of the Peloponnesus I saw revolutionary symptoms, and from that moment I held aloof. What has not been done to dissolve the alliance? Attempts have been made to excite my suspicions or fear, and to wound my self-love; I have been openly outraged; the world understood me badly in supposing that my principles could be shaken by little vanities, or could give way before small resentments. No, no; I will never separate myself from the monarchs with whom I am united. It should be permitted to kings to form public alliances, to protect themselves against secret associations. What temptations can be offered to me? Why should I extend my empire? Providence has not placed under my command eight hundred thousand soldiers to satisfy my ambition, but to uphold religion, morality, and justice, and to conserve those principles of order on which society must repose."

These were noble sentiments, nor can it be doubted that they were sincere; but the character of Alexander was impulsive and marked by instability. His life, indeed, was full of contradictions, for it was uninfluenced by any abiding principle. At Verona he disclaimed every desire of territorial aggrandisement; but he coveted Constantinople, and actually despoiled his brother-in-law, the king of Sweden, of Finland, by a combination of craft and force which must ever excite unqualified reprehension. It is true, that the acquisition of that province was of the same political importance to Russia, as Normandy under English dominion would be to France, for the guns of the Swedes could be heard at St. Petersburg. By this conquest Russia projected herself 160 miles, touching the frontier of Norway, and bending round it 190 miles, until it reached a line drawn due north from the Tornea, when it descends on that river, and continues running parallel with it till it falls into the Gulf of Bothnia, intersecting a country through which the Swedish troops always passed into Finland. Russia secured Aland, which is only twenty-four miles from the coast of Sweden, and the ports of Abo and Sweaborg, thus completely changing her relative position with Sweden: where she was vulnerable she became menacing.*

The seizure of Finland was accompanied by very marked hypocrisy. In 1808 it was entered by the Russian troops commanded by General Buxhowden, who published a manifesto to the people containing the following passages: "It is with the greatest regret that his majesty the emperor of all the Russias sees himself forced to send into your country the troops under my orders. But his majesty the king of Sweden is very far from desiring to unite with his imperial majesty in the pacific efforts by which the emperor seeks to re-establish the tranquillity of Europe, so long disturbed, which cannot be hoped for without the happy alliance of the two most powerful empires in the world

* Sir Robert Wilson.



HELSINGFORA

(Russia and France are here intended). On the contrary, the king of Sweden, separating himself more and more from these two states, draws closer his connection with the common enemy (Great Britain). These motives, as well as the regard which his imperial majesty owes to the safety of his own states, oblige him to place your country *under his protection*, and to take possession of it, in order to procure by these means a *sufficient guarantee* in case his Swedish majesty should persevere in the resolution not to accept the equitable conditions of peace that have been proposed to him. It is his imperial majesty's pleasure that all the affairs of the country should have their ordinary course in conformity with your laws, customs, and statutes, which will remain in force so long as his imperial majesty's troops shall be obliged to occupy the country. The civil and military functionaries are confirmed in their respective employments, always excepting those who may use their authority to mislead the people, and induce them to take measures contrary to their interests. All that is necessary for the maintenance and food of the troops shall be paid in ready money on the spot. All provisions shall be paid for according to an amicable agreement between our commissaries and those of the country."

Here Alexander appears as a dissimulator. His object was spoliation, which he finally perpetrated. True to the tortuous policy of Russia, he merely proclaimed a temporary protectorate, intending, at the convenient season, to convert that protectorate into sovereignty, as Catherine had done in the case of the Crimea. When he confirmed "the civil and military authorities in their respective employments," he already usurped the prerogative of the king of Sweden; and when he excepted those who might "mislead the people," he significantly said that any protest by Swedish patriotism against his military occupation would be deemed a crime against his own authority. How he acted as a *Protector* may be judged of by the letter addressed to him by the king of Sweden:—"Honour and humanity require me to

make strong representations against the innumerable horrors and the vexations which the Russian troops have permitted themselves in Swedish Finland. The blood of the innocent victims calls for vengeance upon those who authorised such cruelties. Can it be made a crime in my Finnish subjects not to have wished to let themselves be seduced by promises which are as fallacious as the principles on which they are founded are erroneous? Is it worthy of a sovereign to make it in them a crime? I conjure your imperial majesty to put an end to the calamities and the horrors of war, which ought to call down on your person the malediction of divine Providence."

When Alexander returned to St. Petersburg at the close of the war, his presence was hailed with enthusiasm by all classes of his subjects. He had expelled the invader, and entered his capital as a victor. At Paris he had been respected and trusted even by his conquered enemies; at London, autocrat as he was, a free people had received him with every honour. In Russia he was all in all: abroad he had been the sole ostensible agent of the triumphant campaigns which had avenged the defeats of Eylau and Friedland; at home he was the sole depository of the vows, the prayers, and the hopes of his country. How should the warrior Czar be saluted by his grateful and exultant people? What honours could be invented to commemorate his fame? On this important and difficult subject the senate debated for three days with closed doors. As the Romans distinguished their most illustrious soldiers by the titles derived from the countries where they had triumphed, so Russia, from the earliest times, had instituted or copied that mode of glorifying their most celebrated commanders; but it was felt that Alexander deserved still higher praise; and the senate, by unanimous vote, conferred on him the epithet of "Blessed," which his modesty or wisdom rejected. A triumphal arch was also commenced, but its completion was stopped by imperial command. The only mark of public respect which he condescended to accept were two silver salvers, hand-

somely decorated with emblematical carved wood, from which he partook of bread and salt, the old compliments of Muscovite welcome. This tribute to ancient nationality was the act of a statesman reigning over an illiterate people, among whom tradition has the force of logic. As to titular distinctions, he could afford to despise them, and he knew that they could impart no strength to real power.

Returned to St. Petersburg, he did not idly repose under his laurels. He perfectly understood that his authority was derived from a military source, and he increased and re-equipped his army, so that in the succeeding year he could place 300,000 men in column of march, with 2000 pieces of cannon, their tumbrels, &c., all new from his own arsenals. He now stood at the summit of human grandeur. "The advantages of this campaign to Russia," says Sir Robert Wilson, "were proportionally great to the injury designed by her enemy. Her capital had been consumed, many of her provinces had been laid waste, and above 200,000 of her regular soldiery had perished; but to have developed the resources of the empire, to have electrified the spirit of the people, were copious and lasting compensations for evils which time and industry would repair." In another passage the same judicious writer observes, "Russia, profiting by the events which have afflicted Europe, has not only raised her ascendancy on natural bases sufficient to maintain a preponderating power, but further, she has been presented by her rivals with the sceptre of universal dominion."

The facts stated, and the authorities quoted, give an insight into the personal character and inner life of Alexander up to the year 1814; but his views underwent a very marked change after the battle of Waterloo and his second visit to Paris. On this last occasion he certainly resisted the dismemberment of France, remonstrated against the excesses of the Prussians, and interposed his good offices for the people; but he no longer appeared to countenance those liberal principles that he had formerly enunciated, and

he ceased to be the champion of popular or constitutional rights. It is, however, true, that he was disposed to make some partial reparation of the wrongs so long and so cruelly inflicted on Poland, and wrote in the following terms from Vienna to Count Ostrowski, President of the Senate at Moscow : " It is with particular satisfaction that I announce to you, that the destiny of your country has just been definitively determined by the assent of all the powers united at the Congress." Alexander considered that a constitutional organisation of Poland was the only means of permanent pacification, and granted the charter of 1815 ; but in conceding to a conquered province liberal institutions which he refused to Russia, he committed a grave error in policy. In 1814, Lord Castlereagh warned him that this procedure was calculated to excite in his own states a political ferment, and the sequel justified the prediction of the British statesman. Chateaubriand entertained similar views, remarking, " that the decline of one or the other country must be the inevitable consequence." Alexander, however, was not to be dissuaded. " If longer oppressed," he said in a letter to Lord Castlereagh, " the Poles will one day react against foreign influence, and that reaction must necessarily endanger the tranquility of Russia and of the north." He placed himself in the anomalous position of being the constitutional king of Poland, and the absolute autocrat of all the Russias. He gave to the one a legislative assembly where the popular voice could be heard, and to the latter a nominal and dumb senate. Lord Castlereagh wisely urged, that if the object was to repair a moral wrong, Poland should be erected into an independent kingdom, which would satisfy Austria and Prussia, and command the applause of Europe ; but objected to the forced re-union of the duchy of Warsaw, containing 4,000,000 of inhabitants, with the empire of Russia. However, all friendly remonstrance or argument was unavailing. Alexander proclaimed his intention to guarantee the nationality of Poland, confer upon it a distinct administration, and even an interior extension. These generous promises rendered him highly

popular ; and the Poles, credulous and confiding, expected the reconstruction of their ancient kingdom : but they were soon undeceived ; for after the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, Alexander changed his language and polity, and hope was succeeded by despair.

The constitution granted to Poland based the government on a tripartite division of power ; the three estates of the realm being, the king, a senate, and a house of representatives, united under the style and title of a diet. The executive authority was vested in the king, and in functionaries by him appointed. The crown was hereditary ; it was the prerogative of the king to declare war, convoke, prorogue, and dissolve parliament. He was empowered to appoint a viceroy, who, unless a member of the royal family, was to be a Pole. The king or viceroy was assisted by a council of state and five ministers, responsible for every act and decree violating the constitution. The ministerial administration was subdivided into five departments : 1. Instruction ; 2. Justice ; 3. Interior and Police ; 4. War ; 5. Finance. These five functionaries were subordinate to the president of the council. Considering the exhaustion, humiliation, and misery into which Poland had been reduced, such a constitution, however defective, was a real boon ; it guaranteed personal liberty, and the freedom of religious opinion and worship, a national representation, legislative functions, and judiciary order. The first Polish diet assembled at Warsaw on the 27th March, 1818. The Grand Duke Constantine was elected a deputy by the faubourg of Praga, and during the session was obliged to renounce his privilege as a senator, because by the terms of the constitution no person could sit in both houses. He was elected by a majority of 103 votes to 6, a very evident proof that the new reign had excited the liveliest hopes. The emperor arrived at Warsaw on the 13th of March ; he devoted himself laboriously to the examination of state affairs, and on the 27th he opened the assembly in person, when he delivered a speech in the French language. The session lasted thirty days, and

was remarkable for the moderation and tranquillity of the proceedings. Alexander closed it, expressing his satisfaction with the conduct of the representatives, and the result of their labours. At that juncture every thing augured well for Poland, but it was evident that a state of quiescence could not long continue. The Poles felt that they had but the shadow of independence, and were eager to grasp and retain the substance. They regarded the constitution as a lever by which they might re-establish their nationality, which could have no real existence under a Russian protectorate. Secret societies were soon established, and some of them became affiliated with others growing up in Russia. These soon caused anxiety; and when Alexander, on his way to attend the Congress of Verona, stopped for a short time at Warsaw, he addressed a severe order to Count Kotschubey, minister of the interior, the preamble to which explains his doubts and fears. "The existence in several countries," said the emperor, "of secret societies, which, under the name of Freemasons, had no other than benevolent ends, but some of which have meddled with politics, has terminated by disturbing public tranquillity. The result has been disorders, which several governments have determined to suppress. Personally, I have paid minute attention to every thing calculated to injure the empire; and I ought to be more than ever vigilant at a time when, unfortunately, the most insensate abstractions of modern philosophy have elsewhere produced the most deplorable consequences." By virtue of this order every functionary of the empire was obliged to swear whether or not he belonged to a secret society, either in Russia or any other country; and in case he was so connected, to make oath that he would forthwith abandon the fraternity, under pain of being cashiered. Henceforth, none could obtain civil or military employment unless he signed a similar declaration. An insurrectional movement soon occurred at St. Petersburg in one of the regiments of the guards, the regiment of Semenoff, created by Peter the Great. It was easily suppressed, because the men were not disaffected to the

government, but only mutinous against their officers, whose discipline was not only severe, but cruel: nevertheless, an event of this kind under the autocracy of Russia, where unlimited obedience is the rule, was alarming; and as it occurred contemporaneously with symptoms of opposition in the Polish diet, the keenest solicitude of Alexander was awakened. There occurred also the insurrections of Italy and Spain, and the revolution in Greece; and crowned heads were uneasy at the secret, though not unobserved, fermentation which pervaded Europe: to avert the threatening storm, or prepare for it should it explode, conferences were held at Troppau and Laybach. In the beginning of August 1821, several students, suspected of corresponding with a secret society formed at the Universities of Berlin, Warsaw, and Cracow, were seized by the Russian police, some of whom belonged to the most distinguished families of Poland, and had gained reputation by literary success. The director of the Russian police was immediately dispatched to Berlin, and he put seals on the papers of the Polish students who belonged to the University. Little, however, was discovered to establish guilt, and many young men were released; but several were banished to distant provinces, and the high police were instructed to have a watchful eye on all their movements. Poland now understood her real position. Russia distrusted her, and she distrusted Russia. Suspicion led to tyranny, and the constitutional king played the part of autocrat. The censorship was re-established. Freemasonry and all the other secret associations were suppressed. Polish students were prohibited from attending foreign Universities. Finally, on the 18th April, 1825, the publication of the debates of the diet were forbidden. At the close of that year Alexander died, and left as a legacy to Nicholas the Polish Revolution, which broke out in 1830. Thus failed this curious experiment of reconciling under one and the same crown representative government in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and pure despotism in Russia.

The formation of the Holy Alliance is a remarkable event in

the life of Alexander. That it originated in his religious feelings, which were deep and sincere, there can be no doubt, however much he may have applied it to political purposes. He was piously grateful for the deliverance of Russia from the French invasion, and felt it his duty to commemorate his triumphs by more solemn acts than the building of cathedrals. In his own convictions he believed that he was permitted to be victorious for the good of the human race, and that he was a special and favoured instrument in the hands of Providence. Thus impressed with a solemn sense of his responsibility, he engrafted conservatism on his earlier liberalism, and to harmonise both was the bitter conflict of his later years. By combining Russia, Austria, and Prussia in a holy alliance, he hoped to preserve the peace of Europe, which was a righteous end to contemplate; but the necessities of his position, and the vacillation of his character, compelled or tempted him to use that military organisation in the defence of despotism, and the prostration of public liberty. His views on this subject Alexander himself explained in 1818 to Dr. Egbert, a Prussian evangelical bishop, in the following terms: "In the days of Lutzen, Dresden, and Bantzen, after so many useless efforts, when, in spite of their heroism, your soldiers were obliged to retreat, we, that is your king and myself, were unable to lay aside the conviction that the power of man could do little, and that Germany was lost, without the assistance and special blessing of Providence. Your king and myself rode together unattended, serious, and a prey to reflection, without exchanging a word. At length the dearest of friends broke silence, and said, ' Things cannot go on so ; we are in the direction of the east, and it is towards the east that we ought and must march. We shall arrive there, God willing ; and if, as I trust, he should bless our united efforts, we will proclaim in the face of heaven our conviction, that to him alone belongs the honour.' We promised and exchanged a pressure of hands upon it with sincerity. Then came the victories of Culm, of Hotzbach, and Leipsic ; and when we arrived at Paris, we had

reached the end of our painful course. The king of Prussia reminded me of the holy resolution of which he had entertained the first idea ; and Francis I., who shared our views, our opinions, and tendencies, entered willingly into the association. The idea of the Holy Alliance originated in the hour of misfortune ; it was realised in the propitious hour of gratitude and happiness. The Redeemer inspired every thought comprised in the alliance, all the principles it announces. It is not our work, it is God's. Whoever does not recognise and feel this,—whoever, mixing sacred with profane things, views it but as a mask for hidden thoughts and secret political designs,—has no voice in this discussion."

Having thus described the origin of the Holy Alliance, he proceeded to enlarge on the uses to which it ought to be applied. "Of what use is the Holy Alliance," he said, "if the principles of which it is the exponent remain isolated in the midst of the people, and do not penetrate their hearts? This could only be done completely and with sincerity by means of the Bible as it exists ; we possess it in every idiom ; it is to be found among all people. Of all translations, that of the great Luther, they say, is the best, and surpasses others in clearness, warmth, cordiality, and precision. We should circulate those holy books as they have come down to us. Commentaries have the fault of substituting for the texts the ideas of the commentators, which are not received by all the world. Let it be the business of every Christian, to whatever creed he may belong, to suffer the Holy Bible to act freely upon him according to his capacity. The action must needs be beneficial and stimulating, as proceeding from a divine book, the Book of books. Its effects upon each will be different ; but it will make of each individual all that could be made of him, according to his peculiar nature. Unity in variety ;—is not that the great point to arrive at to cause churches and nations to prosper? That principle of unity in variety we see every where in external nature, and likewise in the history of nations, only we

must not think to measure it by the short space of our own lives ; it is to ages and decades of ages we must look when we wish to judge the result of a great struggle between forces opposed and hostile to each other. On contradictions, falsehoods, vain commotions, all the offspring of party-spirit, time does justice ; it throws them off like an impure froth which evaporates. Truth endures, but truth is slow in its action ; it requires sometimes ages before it is fully admitted : nevertheless, it penetrates ; it is impossible to seal it hermetically, as some would wish to do with the Bible. Do not the sun's rays pierce ? Those who live in its light are the children of light."

On his early education, as directed by his grandmother, Alexander made the following remarks to Bishop Egbert: "The Empress Catherine was a woman of prudence and mind ; she was a great woman, and her name will live for ever in Russian history. But with respect to that part of education which develops the piety of the heart, the court of St. Petersburg was pretty much what all others were at that time ; there was abundance of words, but little sense ; much exterior practice, but the essence of Christianity was absent. I felt the void in my heart, accompanied by a strange presentiment. I went—I came—I sought diversions. The burning of Moscow at last illumined my spirits, and the judgment of God on the frozen field of battle filled me with a warmth of faith I had never felt before. From that moment I learned to know God, such as he is in the Bible ; from that moment I tried to comprehend, as I do now comprehend, his wish and his law. The resolution to devote to God alone my glory, my person, and my reign, has been matured and strengthened within me. From that time I became another man ; and to the deliverance of Europe from ruin I owe my own safety and deliverance. It is only since Christianity has become the important object of my life, since faith in my Redeemer has manifested in me its strength, that the peace of God, and I thank God for it, has entered my

soul: though it was not at once I arrived at that point; believe me, the road that led me to it was beset with many dangers, many doubts.”*

These revelations, so precious for history, ought to leave no doubt of the sincerity of Alexander, although it has been asserted that his religion was tinged with mysticism. Perhaps the passion for military glory was extinct within him, and his desire of territorial aggrandisement satisfied, when his ambition began to flow into new channels. As he had been a conqueror, so he now desired to become a pacificator, holding the sword not to excite war, but to secure peace. But it is certain, that as he became impressed by piety, he departed from his early liberalism; and no longer holding that “hereditary right was an abuse,” as he did in his conversation with Napoleon, he determined to arrest all progress by identifying it with revolution. Thus at the congress of Laybach, in 1821, he sanctioned the principle of armed intervention in Sicily and Piedmont, forgetting that he had wished to be a constitutional king in Poland; and at the congress of Verona, in 1822, he urged the French invasion of Spain to restore the absolute throne of Ferdinand. In fact, during the later part of his life, that is, from the deportation of Buonaparte to St. Helena to his death in 1825, Alexander was perpetually struggling between his natural inclination and what he deemed to be the duties or necessities of his position. His personal temper underwent a remarkable change; and though he could not be charged with moroseness, he was a prey to the most depressing melancholy, which deepened as he advanced in years. Some writers have attributed this depression of spirits to the pangs of conscience; for it is certain that he knew the designs of the conspirators against his father Paul; but whether he was aware

* These personal revelations of the Emperor Alexander to Bishop Egbert are contained in a German work, entitled *Characteristic and Historical Fragments of the Reign of Frederick William the Second*, and are quoted by Schnitzler.

that they meditated his murder, or only perpetual imprisonment, is a doubt that probably will never be solved. Cesar La Harpe, the preceptor of Alexander, has written a commentary on the Holy Alliance, which, considering the source from which it sprang, is well worthy of record. "Although intrepid in the midst of danger," writes La Harpe, "Alexander had a horror of war. Thoroughly aware of the abuses that excite the discontent of nations, he hoped that during a lengthened peace, the want of which was generally felt, the governments of Europe, recognising the importance of undertaking such reforms as the necessities of that age called for, would seriously apply themselves to that work. To this end a state of profound tranquillity was indispensable; and as the confusion of the past thirty years appeared to have greatly weakened the old ideas of order and subordination, he thought he should be able to remedy that by making a solemn appeal to religion. So far, at least, as this monarch is concerned, no doubt such an appeal was an emanation proceeding from his own noble heart; but the genius of evil soon took possession of those philanthropic conceptions, and turned them against himself. The assemblage in the 'Plaine des Vertus' (10th September, 1814) of a Russian army of 160,000 men ready for the field, struck with amazement the diplomatic corps of Europe who were present at the imposing spectacle; but such an exhibition of the military strength of a vast empire alarmed them much less than the invisible power and perfect moral influence which the greatness of soul and well-known principles of the monarch, who now reviewed his troops, had created. At this period, indeed, from north to south, from east to west, the eyes of the oppressed were turned to Alexander I.; but from this moment is also dated the conspiracy which secretly plotted to strip him of that formidable power which gave him for auxiliaries every friend of enlightenment and humanity, the universal co-operation of honest men. Disposed by the native moderation of his character to consent to any

thing which removed fears of his preponderating influence, and willing at any price to dissipate the alarm that was feigned or felt, he consented to the establishment of a court of Areopagus, where a majority of votes should decide the measures to be taken in common for the maintenance of the general tranquillity. The genius of evil quickly caught a glimpse of the advantage he might reap from so generous an abrogation of this preponderating influence. Thanks to the troublesome and vexatious turn the members managed to give to the progress of ordinary affairs, the confidence of the nations was impaired; and the magnanimous monarch who had so well deserved it, lost it amid the acclamations of the enemies of his glory, who did not hesitate to impute to his obstinate and absolute will measures the most unpopular, which they dictated in their Areopagus."

This statement is dictated by partiality, not by truth; and however admirable may be the generous courage of the preceptor who stands boldly forward to defend and justify his pupil, no confidence can be reposed in an apology which is contradicted by the pupil himself. Alexander did not "consent to the establishment of a court of Areopagus," but was its principal founder, though the idea, as he himself declares, originated with the king of Prussia. The review of his troops in the 'Plaine des Vertus' in 1814, could not have generated the scheme of a holy alliance, which had been agreed upon in 1812; and while every praise is given to the virtues and moderation of the emperor, it may be suspected that his "preponderating moral influence" would have had no existence unless backed up by a million of bayonets. If, as La Harpe asserts, he was coerced into acts against his better judgment, that coercion must have proceeded from Austria and Prussia, his only two colleagues; but they were too much under his control, or rather his protectorate, to take the initiative in any measure. Alexander was not only autocratic at home, but aspired to absolutism abroad; and even the moderation for which he is praised was the result

of a calculating policy. He perfectly well knew that the power of ruling did not exist solely in force, and all his early liberalism was made to bend to the exigencies of his position. Of this truth, his conduct during the Greek revolution was ample proof. The Russians sympathised with that movement, and the Czar subscribed largely to funds raised for the support of the Hellenic refugees; but he sternly disowned any approval of the proceedings of Ypsilanti: for how could he justify his coercive measures in Poland, if he fomented a rising of the Greeks against the Sublime Porte?

Alexander was sincerely attached to the Greek church; but in 1810, when his liberalism was ardent, he granted permission to the Jesuits to perform worship in one of the churches of St. Petersburg, which was assigned to their order. The general of the society, justifying himself by a rule promulgated on the 12th February, 1769, founded a college, in which several students were received without any regard to their religious creed. But this intriguing and encroaching brotherhood soon overstepped the limits prescribed by that rule, and endeavoured to instil into the minds of children committed to their care the dogmas of the Latin church, and sought to extend their influence over the faith of adults: such, at least, were the charges brought against them in the ukase issued for their expulsion from the empire. Their schools and colleges were suppressed; their movable and immovable property was sequestrated, and its administration transferred to the Russian minister of finance. Alexander, however, ordered that the expense of deporting them out of the empire should be defrayed by the government. They numbered about 750 persons.

The most important domestic event in the reign of Alexander was the organisation of "Secret Societies," which menaced his life, embittered his later years, and threatened to exterminate the house of Romanoff. During the war with France, he was anxious for the civilisation of his country, and was really

attached to intellectual progress. He foresaw that his troops, in traversing foreign countries, would have their ideas enlarged ; and he rejoiced at the prospect of his officers becoming enlightened. In an audience given at Berlin in 1813, he said, "the march of the Russian army through Germany and on to Paris will be profitable to all Russia. There is a new epoch in history about to commence for us also, and my projects are multifarious." As a proof of his policy and intentions at that period, reference may be made to the following passages which appeared in the *Poste du Nord*, a newspaper printed at St. Petersburg, and bearing date the 4th October, 1814. "The liberty of the press, protected by an august monarch, has the inappreciable advantage of allowing every truth to reach the foot of the throne ; it can displease none but those who wish to isolate the prince from his people, and such men will never be listened to during the reign of Alexander." No writer would have dared to express such sentiments, had he not been assured that they would receive the imperial sanction ; and their publication in so official a style induced many young officers to speak more boldly than they had hitherto done about schemes of political reform, which they had contemplated for several years. These views, however, were not received with favour by the members of the old Muscovite school. They opposed every innovation. An old Russian general dreading what he foresaw, as he was quitting French Flanders with some regiments in 1816, observed, "Instead of sending us home, the emperor would do better to drown us all in the Baltic." The following narrative justifies his apprehensions.

In the year 1816, several young officers who had served in the campaigns of 1813, 1814, and 1815, and were acquainted with the political tendencies of the secret societies established in Germany, conceived the idea of establishing similar institutions in Russia. The first who attempted to organise this scheme were, Colonel Alexander Mouravieff, Captain Nikita Mouravieff, and

Colonel Prince Troubetzkoy ; and the original scheme was founded on the plan of the lodges of Freemasons. These three conspirators were soon joined by Sergius and Mathew Mouravieff-Apostol, officers of the regiment Semenoffsky, and a civilian named Yakouchkine. In 1817, Nikita Mouravieff persuaded Colonel Pestel to join their ranks ; and the first secret society was formed, under the title of the “ Union of Safety, or the True and Faithful Sons of the Country.” The statutes were drawn up by Pestel. The members were divided into three classes—*Brothers, Men, Boyars*. These last were superior in grade to the other two ; and from their body the directors were chosen monthly, under the style of president, superintendent, and secretary. Solemn ceremonies were observed at all the meetings. All swore to observe the secrets of the association, even though they militated against their private convictions. There was a general and a special oath ; this last was imposed on each grade separately, and on the directors, who bound themselves to obey the boyars.

The second society that was formed took the title of the “ Association of Russian Knights.” Its leaders were Yakouchkine, Major-General Michael Orloff, Count Mamonoff, and Nicholas Tourgueneff, a councillor of state. Orloff and Alexander Mouravieff wished to blend the two societies, but they could not agree on the terms. The object of the general was simply to put an end to the abuses which had crept into the interior administration of the empire, and he was anxious to make the project frankly known to the Emperor Alexander. But while this matter was discussing, a rumour was circulated that the emperor intended to re-establish the kingdom of Poland in its ancient integrity ; and this scheme, utterly unfounded, was credited, and attributed to the influence of the secret societies of Poland. Orloff then determined to counterbalance this movement by a Russian movement ; but his designs were never matured, and the association he had contemplated was never formed.

At this juncture Alexander Mouravieff received a letter from Prince Troubetzkoy, in which it was stated that "the emperor had determined to restore to Poland all its provinces conquered by Russia ; and that foreseeing the discontent and opposition he would encounter, had resolved to retire to Warsaw with all his court, and leave the country exposed to all the horrors of anarchy and confusion." This intelligence produced an effect scarcely credible on the minds of the conspirators, and they unanimously decided on regicide. It was proposed to draw lots to select the man who was to strike the deadly blow, when Yakouchkine, whose enthusiasm was kindled to the highest pitch by the speeches of his comrades, insisted on perpetrating the deed. Mad with excitement, he exclaimed, "Destiny has made me its victim ; I am a wicked wretch to whom life is odious : I will be both regicide and suicide." His violence excited alarm ; the conspirators began to reflect, and their fury was calmed. The Major-General von Viessen endeavoured to prove that the report of Prince Troubetzkoy was destitute of foundation. On the other hand, Sergius Mouravieff Apostol, in a written address transmitted on the following day to the association, represented the projected crime as barren of results, because they were not yet prepared to derive any advantage from its committal. To these arguments Yakouchkine yielded ; but he upbraided his companions for exciting him to a deed which they now condemned, and for some time broke off all relation with the conspiracy, which shortly afterwards was reorganised, and took the title of the "Union of Public Good," adopting a new code drawn up by Alexander and Michael Mouravieff, Prince Troubetzkoy, and Peter Koloschine. The authors of the new code affirmed that the welfare of the country was their first object, which could not be opposed to the wishes of the government ; that notwithstanding the immense power of the government, it needed the aid of individuals ; that the association would assist it in maturing and executing wise measures ; and that, without concealing its views from those citizens who deserved to know

them, the whole machinery of the organisation would be worked in secret, to prevent misrepresentations by envy and hatred. The members were divided into four sections. Each had to inscribe his name in one of the sections, but was still bound to share the labours of other sections if so required. The great duty of the first section was philanthropy, or the promotion of public and private benevolence. It was bound to watch over all charitable institutions, and denounce to the directors of those establishments, and also to the government, any abuses they might detect, and to suggest ameliorations. The business of the second section was intellectual and moral education, the diffusion of knowledge, the foundation of schools, especially on the Lancasterian system, and the inculcation of virtue; and the members were specially exhorted to insist on the love of nationality, and the hatred of all foreign influence. The third section was to devote itself to the administration of justice and the procedure in the law-courts. Its members were not allowed to decline judicial offices, but were ordered to fulfil them with zeal and exactitude, to encourage honest practitioners, even to give them pecuniary assistance, to fortify those who were failing in sound principles, to enlighten the ignorant, and to denounce to the government all who violated their duties. Finally, the members of the fourth section were to devote themselves to the study of political economy, and strive to discover the true sources of national wealth, contribute to the development of every department of industry, strengthen public credit, and oppose monopolies.

The members of the "Union of Public Good" were not prohibited from calling the attention of the public authorities to such local abuses as they might discover, although, as a general rule, the *Directors* of the Union reserved that privilege to themselves; and that is the reason why Michael Mouravieff and some others proposed to solicit the emperor to sanction their society; but the majority would not consent. The following was the internal regulation of the Union: Its founders, or primitive members,

constituted the Central Union. Out of this was formed the Central Council, composed of a superintendent and five assessors, one of whom was nominated by the superintendent to the functions of president. Every four months two assessors retired from office, and were replaced by others ; but the office of the superintendent was annual. When the remaining members of the Central Union joined the Council, the assembly took the title of the Central Direction. The *Central Council* exercised executive power in the Union ; the *Central Direction* legislative power. This *Central Direction* elected the functionaries of the Union, of which it was the supreme tribunal. The Council was authorised to receive members, and invest individuals with power, so far as that power affected the locality in which they resided, provided the parties were known to enjoy the confidence of the Central Union. The Direction had also a right to name a temporary chamber of legislation, to examine, amend, and complete the laws of the Union, without changing their fundamental character and object. The laws enacted by this chamber could provisionally be enforced with the assent of the Direction, till they were finally sanctioned by the supreme government of the Union, which could not be established till the Union itself was definitively constituted.

From this explanation it is evident that authority in the secret institution, and the power of directing it towards any given point, rested in the hands of the founders, or primitive members. They received the new members through the Direction. The *directors* were called *effective*, *secondary*, and *principal*. They took the title of *effective* when they were composed of ten members, and then received a copy of the first part of the code. Till this happened they were not deemed effective. However, the Central Union had a right to modify this rule, to accelerate the extension of the society. Every effective Direction could organise a secondary one, whose relations were confined to the former ; but if the secondary Direction established another, and if this last was composed of ten members, it became entirely dependent on its

founder. The title of *Principal Direction* was given to all those which had formed three secondary Directions, or three free societies ; for this last denomination was given to societies which, without forming an integral part of the Union of Public Good, could nevertheless assist the accomplishment of its objects by their influence in science, arts, and literature. The principal Directions had the privilege of receiving the second part of the code. In each Direction, for the purpose of exercising authority, maintaining order, and dividing labour, a Council was elected, consisting of a superintendent and one or two chiefs, according as the Direction consisted of ten or twenty members. All matters, whether in the Directions or in the Central Union, were decided by a plurality of votes. The names of those members who had rendered special services to the Union were inscribed in a *Book of Honour* ; and the names of those who had been expelled in a *Book of Ignominy*. Members were permitted to quit the Union, on pledging themselves to keep secret what they knew. The same vow of secrecy was taken by those who were invited to join the Union, and it was renewed after the first part of the code had been read to them. There was no particular ceremony observed at swearing in a member. Each member paid into a common fund a twenty-fifth part of his income, and promised to obey the laws of the Union.

Such were, according to the first part of the code, the principles and the object of the “ Union of Public Good.” The second part was never drawn up, or at least never received the sanction of the Central Union. A rough draught had indeed been submitted by Prince Troubetzkoy, but it had never been taken into consideration, Alexander Mouravieff having thrown it into the fire with other papers in 1822. The chief conspirators had, however, promised a second part of the code, whether to keep up curiosity and excitement, or for the ultimate purpose of explaining to the new members at a future day the real intention of the founders. The latter, indeed, did not rigidly conform to the first part of the

code. The animating spirit resided in the Central Union, whose main object was to multiply the members, especially at St. Petersburg, where the majority of the Central Direction lived. They had proposed to establish a cheap newspaper to act on public opinion, to print songs and caricatures, and establish a lithographic press out of the country. But these projects were not executed.

According to Pestel and others, so soon as the first association was formed, called the "*Union of Safety*," the founders entertained constitutional ideas, but very vague, and approaching monarchical principles. The first notion of a republic emanated from Novikoff in his draught of a constitution. Pestel also stated, that about the beginning of the year 1820, a sitting of the Central Direction was held at St. Petersburg, when, on the motion of the superintendent, he contrasted the advantages and disadvantages of the monarchical and republican systems. After much discussion the question was put to the vote, when all declared in favour of a republic, excepting Colonel Glinka, who defended monarchy, and proposed to offer the crown to the Empress Elizabeth. From this date republican sentiments predominated, though several members still agreed to respect the title of the Emperor Alexander, provided he gave good laws to Russia. On this point the evidence is very conflicting; and it is equally so on a proposition, variously attributed to Pestel and Nikita Mouravieff, to assassinate the emperor.

Colonel Pestel, then aide-de-camp to Count Wittgenstein, and in that capacity resident at Toulorzyn, the head-quarters of the second army, actively propagated his opinions in the south. He told his young companions that it was the secret wish of the emperor to diffuse his doctrines among the rising generation, particularly among the troops, and that they would win imperial favour by labouring to change the existing system; that at St. Petersburg the most loyal and intelligent were diligently aiding the movement; and that a numerous association, distinguished by

the rank of its members, was preparing every thing for the grand revolution. Pestel made many proselytes, to whom he showed the first part of the code, but he himself did not adhere very closely to its rules. His colleagues rarely resisted his influence. In 1820 some coolness appeared among the conspirators, even among the members of the Central Directions of the South, and some dissent; to check this, Pestel proposed to establish a temporary dictatorship. This scheme, as well as another to substitute a triumvirate for a dictatorship, was rejected; but it was agreed that the deputies should meet at Moscow and determine the future mode of operations. The military duties of Pestel did not allow him to go to Moscow, and the authority of the Directions, of which he was the chief, was confided to Colonel Bourtroff and Lieut.-Colonel Komaroff. The latter had remarked revolutionary tendencies in the association, and a disposition to engage in enterprises condemned by the law, and decided in using his best efforts to dissolve the union. Major-General von Viessen went from Toulertzyn to Petersburg to request that a deputation might be sent to Moscow; and, in consequence of this demand, Nicholas Tourgueneff and Glinka were selected to attend the meeting. There were present, besides those already mentioned, two brothers of Viessen's, Major-General Orloff, Colonel Grabbe, Yakouchkine, Michael Mouravieff, and Okhotnikoff. At several preliminary conferences held among the members, General von Viessen proposed to divide the association into three classes: the first was to be called "The Unknown," invested with supreme authority and legislative power; the second, "The Agents," who were to collect information, travel, communicate what they learned verbally, but abstain from writing; the third were to be styled "Novices." These views gave rise to lively discussions; they were combated by Tourgueneff, Orloff, Bourtzoff, Koloschine, and Komaroff. Yakouchkine said one day to the last, "I see in the expression of your countenance that you intend to betray the society." "Without doubt," replied Komaroff, "if it exceed the limits prescribed by the code I have seen." "But," rejoined the

other, "it is impossible to be so confined." Shortly afterwards, Orloff declared in writing that he would no longer be a member, and firmly persisted in that resolution, in spite of the importunities of his colleagues. About the end of March 1821 it was agreed at a general meeting to dissolve the Union; and Tourgueneff, acting as president, announced, in the name of all the deputies, that it was irrevocably dissolved, on account of the divergency of opinion, and from dread of its existence becoming known to the government. The code of the "Union of Public Good," and other documents, were committed to the flames.

But the real motives which had prompted this *ostensible dissolution* was a conviction that the real aim of the society was not defined with sufficient clearness, and that the vague wording of its statutes had paralysed its action; moreover it was felt desirable to get rid of members who were too cautious or faint-hearted, and whose character and opinions disqualified them from being useful auxiliaries of the Central Direction. The chief and more determined conspirators, who were then at Moscow, resolved to wait their time and form a new association, to divide it into two classes, and lay it down as a principle, that the members admitted into the first class should alone know the real object sought to be accomplished, which was to prepare Russia for a fundamental change in the organic laws of the state. Admission into the first class required the assent of the Superior Direction of St. Petersburg; into the second, the unanimous votes of two sections, four of which were to be established at Petersburg, Moscow, Toulertzyn, and Smolensko.

Colonel Bourtzoff and Lieut.-Colonel Komaroff, who reported to the Direction of Toulertzyn the dissolution of the Union, were empowered to place before it a communication, written by the president of the general assembly of Moscow; but Pestel and Youschnersky, already informed of this intention through a private channel, resolved, at a preliminary conference, first, not to recognise the dissolution of the Union; secondly, to profit by the oppor-

tunity, and get rid of all pusillanimous associates by alarming representations of the difficulties and dangers of the enterprise. So soon as Bourtzoff had delivered his message, and retired with Komaroff, Youschnersky pronounced a studied speech, which, far from producing the effect he desired, only excited the zeal of his auditors. Colonel Avranoff, who seceded at a later date, declared, that if every other man abandoned the Union, it would exist in his own person. Others insisted that the deputies sent to Moscow had exceeded their instructions, and that the Union was not dissolved. At this meeting the leading men assumed the style of Boyars of the Union. Pestel, Youschnersky, and Nikita Mouravieff were appointed presidents and directors. There appears, however, to be some doubt as to this arrangement. Pestel affirmed, on his examination, that it was after these differences that the members of the Association of the South were divided into BROTHERS, MEN, and BOYARS. The brothers had no power to initiate; the men had, but were not allowed to disclose to the initiated the name of the members. The boyars formed the Direction to decide all matters of grave import. When a new member was admitted he was not sworn; his word of honour sufficed. Nikita Mouravieff deposed that at Petersburg the association was almost wholly disorganised; the great majority of the members had retired; the Direction were not connected with each other; there was no common rule binding on all, and few knew the ultimate object in view.

It was not till the close of 1822 that the Association of St. Petersburg, otherwise called the Association of the North, was completely organised. It was divided into two classes, Believers and Adherents. The former constituted the superior section, and was composed of the founders; other members, drawn from the Adherents, might be admitted into it, provided all the Believers resident in St. Petersburg gave their assent. This unanimity was also necessary where any decisive matters were involved. The functions of the superior sections were to elect the members of the

Directory and of the Council, to authorise the initiation of new members, and to render an account of all proceedings to the Directory. Members not belonging to the superior section could only initiate two candidates, and also required the permission of the member by whom they themselves had been introduced.

When this secret society was fully organised, the only chief recognised for some time was Nikita Mouravieff. Towards the close of 1823, the Believers resolved to name three presidents, and adjoined to Mouravieff the Prince Sergius Troubetzkoy, recently returned from foreign countries, and the Prince Eugene Obolensky. In the following year Troubetzkoy went to Kieff to use his influence as a staff-officer over the troops quartered there, and to watch the conduct of Pestel, who began to be mistrusted, as an intriguer full of artifice, a Napoleon rather than a Washington. Soon after this Ryleieff replaced Troubetzkoy. There appears to have been little communication between the southern and northern societies, and this was verbal. Nikita Mouravieff prepared the plan of a new constitution, which is curious. He recommended the monarchical form of government, but left the emperor no more power than the President of the United States; and proposed to divide Russia into independent states, connected by a federal union. Another constitution, called the Russian code, framed in a purely republican spirit, was drawn up by Pestel. He also broke up the unity of the empire, and separating from it all the provinces which had been conquered from Poland, constituted of these an independent state; under the title of the state of Kholmogory, he united Livonia, Esthonia, Courland, and the existing governments of Novgorod and Twer: another state, to be called Severia, was to be composed of the existing governments of Archangel, Yaroslaf, Vologda, Kostroma, and Perm. According to this scheme, a provisional government was only to be a transition to a republic. The provisional government was to establish a State of Judea, to be peopled with Russian and Polish Jews. They were to traverse European Turkey, and choose a fertile

territory on the coast of Asia Minor, and there establish their independence.

Pestel used at times to be very indulgent to his regiment, at others very severe. The indulgence, he induced his fellow-conspirators to say, arose from his own kind and generous character ; the harsh punishments were ascribed to the peremptory orders of the emperor. Sergius Mouravieff also took every pains to win the affections of his regiment, and also other regiments of the ninth division of the army quartered at Tchernigoff. In January 1823 the chiefs of all the committees met at Kieff. These were Pestel, Youschnersky, Basilius, Davydoff, the Prince Sergius Volkonsky, Mouravieff, and Bestoujeff Roumine. The question was proposed : “ What shall we do with the imperial family, after the establishment of the new laws ? ” “ We must exterminate them,” exclaimed Pestel. Youschnersky, Davydoff, and Volkonsky were of that opinion ; but Bestoujeff Roumine was contented with the death of the emperor alone. As to the other members, they were to be deported out of the empire, and for that purpose the fleet at Cronstadt was to be employed. On this occasion Sergius Mouravieff opposed his colleagues ; he would not consent to be a regicide. It was finally decided that though Pestel had a majority of votes, so grave a question ought not to be decided by six persons. The conference broke up, after which Bestoujeff Roumine sent a letter to Youschnersky, in which, after condemning the extreme views of his accomplices, he undertook to prove that the members of the imperial family would cease to be dangerous when the revolution was completed. It is nevertheless certain that at another meeting held at Kamenka, in the same year, 1823, both Mouravieff and Roumine agreed to the plans of Pestel ; and the latter wrote to the secret society of Poland, urging it to put the Grand Duke Constantine to death. The Polish and Southern societies corresponded for some time, but they ultimately ceased to act together.

While these negotiations were pending, the Committee of Vas-

silkoff, composed of Mouravieff and Bestoujeff Roumine, prepared a rising of the ninth division of the army, encamped round the fortress of Bobrouisk, where they were to be reviewed by the Emperor Nicholas and the Grand Duke Constantine. They clothed some of the conspirators in the uniform worn by the regiment of Colonel Scheveikosky, one of their accomplices, intending to seize Alexander and Nicholas, and to arrest General Diebitsch, to incite the troops to rebellion, march on Moscow, and cause all the troops on the line to mutiny. But this plan failed in its execution, for the leaders soon perceived that they would not receive sufficient support. Pestel also had conceived a plan for assassinating the emperor at the review of the troops at Belaia-Tserkoff; which also proved abortive, as Alexander was not present. The design was to have seized him on his arrival at the castle of the Countess Branika, and to have put him to death had he offered the slightest resistance. But the meditated blow was only postponed, and the conspirators resolved to strike it in May 1826.

The declining health of the empress induced the physicians to recommend a journey to the southern provinces of the Black Sea for change of air. She was soon followed by the emperor, whose departure from St. Petersburg was saddened by gloomy presentiments. Before he quitted the capital he went to the monastery of St. Alexander Newski, oppressed by a profound melancholy. On his route he saw a comet, and called out to his old and faithful coachman, "Ilya, have you seen the new star? Do you know that a comet always announces some dreadful calamity? May God's will be done!" He remained but a few days at Taganrog, where the empress was residing, and whose health had improved under the influence of a genial climate. On the first of November, 1825, he started for the Crimea, but was seized with the first attacks of intermittent fever at Mariopol. This attack, accompanied by a derangement of the gastric juices, attracted the serious attention of Sir James Wylie, who for many years had been his medical attendant. The doctor offered some advice, but the emperor

answered, while a smile played on his lips: "I have no need of you or of your Latin, I am better able to treat myself; moreover, my confidence is in God and a sound constitution." Wylie remonstrated, but the emperor continued: "My life is in the hands of God; nothing can rescue me from the destiny reserved; therefore do not speak to me of drugs or potions, in which I have no faith." On the 17th November he returned to Taganrog, and his disease assumed the character of typhus. Fainting fits followed rapidly in succession, by which he was much weakened; nor did he from that time leave the sofa on which he died. However, in this state he gave various orders, especially to General Diebitsch, relatively to the Grand Duke Constantine, then at Warsaw.

At this critical period Lieutenant-General Count de Witt, who commanded in chief the cavalry colonised and cantoned in Little Russia, arrived at Taganrog, informed of the existence and object of the conspiracy, which had been communicated to him by a pretended accomplice, who had joined the Association merely to learn their secrets. He, however, was not the first who had advised the emperor of his danger, but an Englishman named Sherwood, a non-commissioned officer in the third regiment of Lancers. Sherwood was aware of the conspiracy to overthrow the imperial government; and after he had disclosed what he knew to the emperor, he asked and received permission to go to Kursk and collect more minute particulars. At that time Colonel Scheveikosky was deprived of the command of his regiment, probably through the revelations of Sherwood. This excited the greatest alarm and fury among the conspirators, and some proposed to march at once on Kief, with the eighth and ninth divisions of infantry, the third division of hussars, and the artillery attached to these corps. Others desired to send assassins to Taganrog, for which mission Colonel Artamon Mouravieff offered himself; but his accomplices said, "No, you are necessary here for your regiment." However, this project of murder was soon abandoned, and Scheveikosky beseeched them, with tears in his eyes, as the report states,

not to sacrifice themselves for him, but to postpone the execution of the whole enterprise. To this they consented, seeing that immediate success was hopeless; but they swore to commence the revolution without fail in the beginning of 1826.

The emperor was perfectly well aware of the object of this conspiracy through Count de Witt and Sherwood, and knew that he was marked out as the victim of assassination. It was the bitter draught reserved for the last days of his existence. His mental anguish exceeded his bodily sufferings, and he was sick of life. Dr. Wylie pressed him to take some medicine. "My friend," said Alexander to him, "it is the state of my nerves to which you must attend; they are in frightful disorder." "Alas!" rejoined the physician, "that happens more frequently to kings than to ordinary men." "Yes," said the emperor, with animation, "but with me in particular there are many special reasons, and at the present hour more so than ever." Some days afterwards, when his brain was almost delirious, the Czar gazed intently on the doctor, his whole countenance manifesting intense fear. "Oh, my friend," he exclaimed, "what an act, what a horrible act!" After a brief pause, he continued: "The ingrates! the madmen!" He expired at Taganrog on the 30th November, 1825, in the presence of the empress, whose tender care and devoted affection smoothed the pillow of death. All Europe believed he had been poisoned; but that once-accredited rumour has been silenced by the clearest evidence. Sir James Wylie drew up a report in Latin of the last illness of his illustrious patient, from which the preceding details have been taken.

THE INTERREGNUM.

The Grand Duke Constantine was heir to the throne. When intelligence of Alexander's death reached St. Petersburg, the Grand Duke Nicholas repaired to the senate to take the oaths of allegiance and fidelity to his elder brother; but he knew that the late emperor had confided to the grand council of the empire certain documents, under seal, which regulated the succession to the crown. These had been placed in a box, on which the following superscription was written by the hand of Alexander: "To be deposited in the Council-office of the empire, till I order otherwise; but in the event of my death, the seals are to be broken at an extraordinary sitting, before any other business is transacted."

The council was accordingly convoked; and the president, Prince Lapoukhin, considering it his duty to pay implicit obedience to the orders of the deceased monarch, broke the seals. The box contained three documents of the gravest importance. The first was a manifesto of the Emperor Alexander, written and signed at Tsarskoe Selo, on the 28th August, 1823; the second, a letter of the Grand Duke Constantine, dated St. Petersburg, the 26th January, 1822; the third, a reply of the emperor's to that letter, which contains the following curious statement: "Not recognising in myself the genius, talents, or mental strength, necessary to fulfil the duties of sovereign authority, to which I may have the right conferred by my birth, I entreat your majesty to transfer that right to him who claims it after me, and thus assure the stability of the empire. By this renunciation I shall add a new guarantee to the engagement I solemnly and spontaneously contracted when divorced from my first wife.* All the circum-

* The Grand Duke Constantine in first nuptials had married Anne, Princess of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld, from whom he lived separate during nineteen years. Alexander dissolved that marriage, after having referred the



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stances of my present position impel me more and more to this course, which proves to the empire and to the world the purity of my motives and the sincerity of my convictions."

The manifesto of Alexander was substantially as follows: "The spontaneous act by which our younger brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, renounces his rights to the throne of all the Russias, is and must remain fixed and irrevocable. The said act of renunciation, that its publicity at a fitting time may be assured, shall be deposited in the grand cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow, and in the three high administrations of our empire, that is, in the archives of the Holy Synod, of the Council of the Empire, and of the Directing Senate. By virtue of the renunciation, and in conformity with the strict tenour of the act which regulates the succession to the throne, our second brother the Grand Duke Nicholas is recognised as heir to the throne."

Nicholas was perfectly well acquainted with all these arrangements when he proclaimed Constantine emperor; but even after the documents were read, he persisted in refusing the crown, saying, "I do not wish to be emperor at the expense of my elder brother. If the Grand Duke Constantine perseveres in his renunciation, and insists on the sacrifice of his hereditary rights, then, but then only, will I exercise mine by accepting the vacant throne."

This determination, however extraordinary it may appear, was explained by Nicholas in the manifesto which he published at his accession, which contained the following passages: "We only sought to guarantee against the possibility of infringing that law which regulates the succession to the crown, and to place in full light the loyalty of our intentions, and preserve our dear country

question to the Holy Synod. Two months afterwards Constantine married the Countess Jane Grudzinska, daughter of Count Grudzinski of Wittoslaw. On that occasion the emperor gave the estate of Lowicz, which was erected into a principality; and Jane Grudzinska was created Princess of Lowicz, a title that was to pass to any children she might bear to Constantine.

from the slightest risk of disturbance, by not suffering the shadow of a doubt to be cast on the person of the legitimate sovereign. That resolution taken, the purity of our conscience before God, who reads our innermost thoughts, was blessed by her Imperial Majesty Maria, our well-beloved mother."

The news of Alexander's death at Taganrog reached Warsaw on the 7th December. Constantine wrote on the 8th to his mother, reminding her of the act of renunciation, and renewing it. The Grand Duke Michael, the youngest brother, was also at Warsaw when the fatal intelligence arrived, and started immediately for St. Petersburg, bearing the letter of Constantine, and reached the capital on the 18th of December. It was so clear and explicit as to leave no doubt on the minds of the imperial family that his resolution was inflexible; nevertheless, Nicholas remained firm in rejecting the throne, and prevailed on Michael to return to Warsaw and obtain from Constantine a fresh and formal declaration of his views. Michael started, but at Dorpat met a courier dispatched by Constantine to Prince Lapoukhin, president of the Council of the Empire, with a letter categorically adhering to his renunciation of January 1822. This was decisive; and on the 24th December, 1825, Nicholas accepted the crown. All the high authorities of the empire immediately took the oath of allegiance, and the regiments of guards swore fidelity to the new Czar. The interregnum lasted three weeks before the succession was definitively and formally fixed, and civil war still further delayed the coronation; for it was the destiny of Nicholas to ascend a throne whose steps were streaming with blood.

Prince Wolksonski and General Diebitsch were in attendance on Alexander at Taganrog, and opened dispatches which the emperor could no longer read. The latter took on himself the whole responsibility. The documents disclosed the imminency of the danger which threatened the imperial family; and Diebitsch promptly ordered the arrest of Colonel Pestel, and of twelve other officers of high rank, with many others of an inferior grade. This

took place on the 25th November; and on that day, which destroyed all the hopes of the conspiracy of the South, the revolution broke out at St. Petersburg, fomented by the association of the North. The conspirators were soon apprised of the arrest of Colonel Pestel; and further, that the Sub-Lieutenant Rostoftsoff had reported to the government that attempts had been made to corrupt some of the soldiers of the imperial guard. They held a meeting, and unanimously exclaimed: "Our scabbards are broken, and we can no longer conceal our swords." To give unity and efficacy to these movements, they resolved to elect a dictator; and unfortunately for their success, their choice fell on Prince Troubetzskoi, illustrious by his descent, which was superior to that of the reigning house of Romanoff, as he could trace his lineage up to Rourick, the founder of the empire; but he was deficient in firmness, and his irresolution degenerated into cowardice. He was the dupe of his own illusions, and the tool of others, who hoped to add lustre to their enterprise by enlisting his historic name in their cause. There were some among them who disapproved of this election; for when Ryleieff remarked that their decisions were excellent in choosing so admirable a chief, Jakoubovitch sneeringly replied, in alluding to the stature of the prince, "Yes, he is a tall man."

Immediate action now became peremptory. It was known that the oath of fidelity to Nicholas would be administered to the troops in garrison at St. Petersburg on the 26th December, the grand council having been convened for that day at the Winter Palace. It was resolved, therefore, to work on the loyal feelings of the soldiers, by persuading them that the oath would be illegal, and even treasonable, as the Grand Duke Constantine, far from having surrendered his rights, was advancing from Warsaw at the head of an army to enforce his hereditary claims. Several companies of the regiments of Moscow, believing this statement of their officers, broke open the military stores, and provided themselves with powder and shot. They were commanded to desist by an

adjutant, in the name of Major-General Friedrichs, colonel of the regiment; but he was violently opposed by the Prince Chtchepin Rostofski, who seeing Friedrichs' approach, struck him with his sword, and Michael Bestoujeff shot him with a pistol: he fell severely wounded, but was carried to his quarters, and ultimately recovered from his double wound. This was the signal for civil war. The troops shouted, "Hurrah for Constantine!" The Moscow regiment was joined by some companies of grenadiers and a battalion of marines of the guard, and took up their position behind the statue of Peter the Great. They were quickly supported by a large mass of the populace. These regiments had actually taken the oath, but felt themselves relieved from it as it had been obtained through deception, for they did not doubt the solemn assurances of their own officers. Other regiments who had not yet sworn refused to do so, and hurried to the support of their insurgent comrades. Some, under Lieutenant Panoff, crossed the frozen bed of the Neva to attack the fortress; but there they encountered resistance, and retracing their steps, prepared to assault the Winter Palace, which they hoped to carry by a *coup de main*, but there they also failed. It was held by the regiment of Finland, to whom Nicholas had intrusted his children; and they had sworn to defend them to the last extremity, a duty which they faithfully performed.

Alexis Orloff, colonel of the horse-guards, as soon as the alarm was given, had hurried to the palace, in front of which he stationed some of his squadron. Two battalions of the regiment Preobrajenski, and the grenadiers of Paulofski, were also on the ground. Nicholas then advanced towards the rebels at the head of these troops, and using the old Russian formula, exclaimed, "Good day, my children!" The answer was, "Hurrah for Constantine!" The conspirators shouted, "Hurrah for the Constitution!" but the ignorant soldiers knew not the meaning of the word, and some asked whether it was the wife of Constantine? a question which clearly proves that they were unfitted for that

liberty which the officers alone appreciated. Firing commenced. Count Miloradovitch, governor of St. Petersburg, was ordered to advance, and make a last effort to recal the insurgents to their duty. He had highly distinguished himself during the war against France, and, from his personal bravery, was called the Russian Murat: he relied much on his military popularity; but his voice was not permitted to be heard. Obolenski wounded him with a bayonet-thrust, and Kakofski shot him dead with a pistol. A furious attack was now made on the Winter Palace; but it was bravely repulsed by a young lieutenant named Nassakin, and the regiment of Moscow made no impression on the regiment of Finland. On this disastrous day the Grand Duke Michael rendered signal services to the throne. The regiment of Moscow belonged to his division; he repaired to the barrack, and there found six companies who had not yet joined their comrades, explained the deception that had been practised, prevailed on them to take the oath of allegiance, and led them to the support of the emperor. Nicholas still hesitated to use the force at his disposal; and hoping that religion would have a salutary influence on the feelings of the soldiers, summoned the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg to his presence. He at once attended, holding up the cross, escorted by the Metropolitan of Kief and a numerous body of the clergy; but his appearance failed to tame the infuriated passions of the revolvers. None would listen to his exhortations, which were silenced by beat of drum, and he retired.

All conciliatory measures were now deemed useless; and Nicholas ordered the horse-guards and the chevalier-guards to charge the masses congregated round the statue of Peter the Great. It was executed vigorously. Chtchepin Rostofski ordered the soldiers to fire. Colonel Velho had his arm broken; General Voinoff narrowly escaped with life from the pistol of Kuchelbecker; and Colonel Sturker was slain by Kakofski, who had deprived Miloradovitch of life. The resistance of the insurgents lasted several hours, and it became necessary to crush the rebellion

by a decisive blow, lest a protracted struggle might extend its ramifications, and crown it with ultimate victory. The populace had been maddened by brandy, and from hour to hour their ranks became more densely thronged, while a momentary success emboldened their courage and excited their fury. Several guns were now brought by the imperialists to the field of battle on the Isaac Square, at the angle of the boulevard of the Admiralty. The insurgents were again summoned to surrender, and a shot was fired; but they still held their ground, when two volleys of grape-shot carried death and disorder into their crowded columns; they fled towards the spacious quays of the Neva, pursued by the chevalier-guards, who made numerous prisoners. The revolt was over, the Czar returned to his palace, and on meeting the empress exclaimed, "What a deplorable commencement of my reign!"

The insurrection of St. Petersburg was badly organised. It aimed at the establishment of liberal institutions among a people trained to servility, and who had no conception of national freedom. The officers, sincere and enlightened, could only count on the unreflecting obedience of a few regiments, not on that enthusiasm which springs from high principle. They excited rebellion by falsehood, liable to be deserted the moment the imposture was unmasked, and endeavoured to dethrone royalty by appealing to the sacredness of hereditary claims. To themselves Constantine and Nicholas were equally hateful, and yet they attempted to enlist the armed force on their side, by proclaiming in the hour of contest the dogma of legitimacy. Such a struggle was as unwise as it was desperate: for had the troops deposed Nicholas, it is certain they would never have fought for a republic; they would have shuddered at their own success when they knew the purpose to which it was turned, and have restored autoeracy at the point of their bayonets. The leaders of the revolt were also most unfortunate in the choice of their chief; for at the first discharge of musketry Troubetzkoi fled, and soon sought refuge at the house of his mother-in-law, the Countess Laval, and afterwards at that of his

brother-in-law, the Count of Lebzeltern, the Austrian ambassador; Such was his cowardice and imprudence, that in the vain hope of sheltering his own person, he did not go to his own residence to burn his papers, which were quickly seized, and furnished conclusive evidence against the brave men who had asserted their principles sword in hand.

It has already been stated that Colonel Pestel, and the other principal leaders of the conspiracy in the south, were promptly arrested; but Sergius Mouravieff and Bestoujeff Roumine were yet at liberty, and they had sown the seeds of corruption in the army of the West, commanded by General Count Saeken. Orders soon arrived from St. Petersburg to seize Mouravieff, who was intriguing with Count Peter Moszynski to stir up the patriotic association of Warsaw; but he at length received a cold and evasive answer. General Ghebel received orders to arrest Mouravieff, which were executed on the 10th January, 1826: he did so with reluctance, for his prisoner was his intimate friend. Ghebel treated his captive with marked indulgence, and called at his dungeon to bid him farewell. At this interview, several officers of the regiment of Tchernigoff rushed in, and declared that the general himself was their prisoner. He drew his sword, and bid them defiance; but the combat was too unequal; he was disarmed, wounded, and fell on the floor, having lost all consciousness. They then seized the soldiers of escort and the courier, who were to conduct the prisoners to St. Petersburg. Major Trukin ordered a battalion of the regiment of Tchernigoff to attack the insurgents; but they fraternised with the rebels, and the major himself was made prisoner. The little troop, animated by their victory, marched on to Vassilkoff, swelling their ranks as they advanced. They plundered the shops of the town to supply their wants; and Mouravieff expedited emissaries in several directions to obtain, at this critical moment, the active aid of as many members of the association of the south as might be able to join his standard.

Before he quitted Vassilkoff, a strange scene was enacted in the

great square of the town. The chaplain of the regiment of Tchernigoff there performed divine service, and read to the assembled soldiers a political catechism composed by Bestoujeff Roumine. This catechism gave a revolutionary interpretation to various passages of the Bible, and sought to prove that democracy was the only form of government acceptable to God. It was loudly applauded by the officers; but it was not understood by the ignorant soldiers, or the equally ignorant townsmen. Indeed, it rudely shocked the only idea they possessed, that of blind and implicit obedience to the Czar. It now became evident to the more sagacious of the leaders, that the revolutionary association of the south could not counterbalance the terrible defeat of the association of the north.

The republican catechism had not produced the effect expected or desired, and they were compelled to fall back on the hereditary rights of Constantine. This artifice succeeded; and Sergius Mouravieff and Bestoujeff Roumine prevailed on the soldiers to swear on images of the saints that they would fight for the cause of the abdicated emperor.

On the 12th January they left Vassilkoff: Sergius hoped to rally all the companies of his regiment, and by their aid seize Kief or Jittomir; and, in fact, he met several of them on his march, who seemed disposed to follow his banner, believing that they were going to defend the usurped throne of Constantine. But habit had become a second nature with Mouravieff, or he was too high-minded to continue a delusion, and he soon spoke frankly to the troops: "After all," said he, "what need have we of Constantine or Nicholas? Surely we can do without either. It is a republic that we require: let us shout, 'Long live the republic!'" The very word was unknown to the rank and file, and for some moments they remained mute with astonishment. At length one of them said to Mouravieff, "We will shout 'Long live the republic!' if that will please you, colonel; but who is to be emperor?"—a striking proof how deplorably the leader had mistaken his mission and the spirit of his age.

This curious dialogue had shaken the resolution of the grenadiers. An officer, Captain Kosloff, loyal to Nicholas, and concealed in the dress of a private, seized the opportunity to bring back the grenadiers to their duty. He harangued them, made them understand that they were deceived; and they carried him off from the main body in spite of every menace. This desertion was a fatal blow to the insurgents. However, Mouravieff still continued his march to Belaia-Tserkoff, where he hoped to secure the co-operation of a regiment in which the revolutionary doctrines had been widely circulated; but unfavourable news compelled him to abandon that project. The hesitation and changes in his movements had given General Sacken time to organise defensive measures, and Mouravieff was soon hemmed in by immensely superior forces between the villages of Oustinoſka and Korovelska. These imperial troops were commanded by Generals Roth and Geismar. The latter appearing on the heights of Oustinoſka, summoned the insurgents to surrender. Resistance was useless, and even hope had vanished. However, Mouravieff formed his six companies in square, and ordered them to march on the hostile cannon, throwing their muskets over their left arm. Probably he thought the artillery would not fire on men thus approaching them; but if so, he was cruelly deceived. His companies executed his orders resolutely, without drawing a trigger; but they were met with two rounds of grape, which carried disorder and death into their ranks. The square was broken, and the dragoons of General Roth completed the rout by a murderous charge. Sergius Mouravieff received a sabre-cut on the head. Twice he endeavoured to rally the grenadiers of Tchernigoff; unfortunately for him, the insurgents, surprised at the firm attitude of their opponents, threw down their arms. They then seized their own leaders, and in that manner Mouravieff and Bestoujeff Roumine were given up to the colonel of the hussars of Mariopol. Six other officers had been made prisoners. Hip-

polytus Mouravieff was slain in the action, and Kouzmin blew out his own brains. Such was the rapid and tragical fate of the insurrection of the South.

On the day following the revolt at St. Petersburg, the emperor reviewed the troops who had been faithful to his cause. They received a gratuity of additional pay, and provisions were abundantly distributed among them. Clemency was shown to the revolted regiments; Nicholas wisely observing, that as they had been betrayed into insurrection by their chiefs, the chiefs alone merited punishment. They received new colours to wipe out the stains from those that had been dishonoured. To this general pardon, however, there were some exceptions even among the privates; those known to have been most active in the rebellion were sent to the Caucasus for two years, to regain their honour by good conduct, the emperor engaging to provide for their wives and children during their banishment.

On the 31st December an imperial manifesto was published, with a view to tranquillise the public mind; and it concluded in the following terms:—"Seduced into revolt by false representations, the soldiers were the dupes of artifice, not the participators in guilty intentions: a rigid investigation has satisfied me of that fact; and I consider it an act of justice, while it affords me the liveliest consolation, to declare them innocent. But justice itself does not permit me to spare the real traitors. According to measures already resolved upon, the trial will embrace all the ramifications of the conspiracy, and the punishment will destroy in its roots an evil that has been growing up for many years. We will purge the sacred soil of Russia from this foreign contagion, and dissipate for ever that odious mixture of melancholy truths and gratuitous suspicions, which shock men of generous souls; we will draw a line of demarcation between the love of country and revolutionary passions, between the desire of improvement and the fury of destructiveness; we will show to the world that the Russian people,

always faithful to the sovereign and the laws, repels the secret efforts of anarchy, as well as the open attacks of declared enemies.”

A Committee of Inquiry was instituted, presided over by Alexander Tatischeff, Minister of War. On the 11th June, 1826, the report was presented to the emperor, by whom it was approved; and two days afterwards he published a manifesto on the subject, which contained the following passages:—“ When, during the first years of our reign, the impenetrable decrees of the Most High had disclosed to us a horrible design, which during ten years had been carried on in darkness, we recognised the finger of God, which visibly traced out our conduct and duty; we then better understood the sanctity of our obligations, as the conspiracy originated long before our accession to the throne, and did not menace our person only, but the whole of Russia. . . . From the examination of the report of the Commission of Inquiry, and of the documentary evidence on which it is founded, two distinct forms of guilt are proved. The first, of the gravest nature, amounted to high treason, long meditated, matured by cunning and hardened by obstinacy, continuously and unceasingly directed towards the accomplishment of the criminal end proposed; the second relates to vague and irrational projects, arising out of weakness of character and a blind confidence,—a defect of penetration to discover the real intent of the true conspirators, or a sudden impulse of the passions, followed by sincere repentance. Such being the nature of their crime, they are only amenable to correctional punishment; as to those inculpated under the first head of accusation, being the leaders, or who more or less approached the active centre of the conspiracy, and knew its real object, they will all be included in the same judgment, although not guilty in the same degree.” A high court of justice was specially convoked to pronounce sentence in this momentous affair, composed of the three first functionaries of the empire, the Imperial Council, the Directing Senate, and the Holy Synod, assisted by fifteen other members

chosen from the highest ranks of the military and civil services. Prince Lapoukhin presided, and the sittings were held at the palace of the Senate. One hundred and twenty-one criminals were arraigned at the bar.

In the reign of the Empress Elizabeth, capital punishment had been abolished in all cases not of a political character, and had been replaced by the knout and exile to Siberia : this has been deemed a merciful alleviation of the severity of the penal code by many writers ; but death frequently follows the infliction of the knout ; and if banishment to Siberia spares life, it encloses the body in a living tomb. However, the Russian laws remained unchanged where political rebellion was proved, and the imperial prerogative alone could rescue the convict from the gallows. Accordingly, the High Court pronounced sentence of death on all the condemned ; but the emperor, “ in a series of additional rules based upon the general order of judicial procedure,” ordained “ that the High Court should determine in what degree particular circumstances aggravated or extenuated the guilt of each individual implicated in a common crime ; classify in distinct categories the shades of culpability of guilt ; and award a varying scale of punishment according to the different degrees of criminality.” A second commission was therefore appointed by the court to determine the scale pointed out in the additional rules ; and it decided that five of the conspirators were placed beyond the pale of exceptional category, and merited death and quartering ; that thirty-one should be decapitated but not quartered ; sentenced seventeen to political death and hard labour in perpetuity, after being exposed in the pillory ; two to hard labour for life without the pillory ; thirty-eight to hard labour for a term of years, to be followed by being colonised in Siberia ; fifteen to perpetual exile in Siberia, after previously undergoing personal degradation ; three to perpetual banishment and degradation ; one to serve in the ranks as a common soldier, with degradation and deprivation of nobility, but

with the reserved right of being promoted ; finally, eight to serve as private soldiers, but without deprivation of nobility, their capability of promotion being also reserved.

This analytical judgment was well received by the public, who gave the High Court credit for impartiality, and a laborious investigation of each separate fact as it bore on the relative degrees of complicity. The members of the Holy Synod, while admitting the justice of capital punishment on those against whom it had been pronounced, declared, in conformity with ancient precedents, that it was incompatible with their sacerdotal functions to affix their signatures to a death-warrant. Ample scope was thus given to the emperor to exercise the prerogative of mercy : he spared the lives of all, excepting the five who had been excluded from any category, and commuted their sentence into hard labour for life, with deprivation of nobility. As to the others, some had their sentence of banishment and hard labour limited to a term of years ; some were confined in a fortress ; others escaped without the forfeiture of their aristocratic dignities. Finally, the imperial decree ordered, that “ as to the state criminals whose names are not mentioned in this ukase, and who, on account of the atrocity of their crimes, have been excluded from all the categories, we abandon them to the decision pronounced by the National High Court of Justiciary, to be executed in conformity to that sentence.” But the emperor did not sanction the barbarous punishment of quartering, which outraged civilisation. This, therefore, was ultimately expunged, and the definitive sentence was thus worded :—
“ The High Court of Justice, taking for its guide that clemency of which his Imperial Majesty has given such magnanimous proofs in commuting the pains and penalties pronounced against the other criminals, and using the discretionary power with which it is invested, decrees, that instead of the punishment of quartering, to which Paul Pestel, Conrad Ryleieff, Sergius Mouravieff Apostol, Michael Bestoujeff Roumine, and Peter Kakhofski, ought to be subjected in virtue of the first sentence of the court, these criminals

are condemned to be hanged as a punishment for their heinous treason."

One day was granted to the criminals to receive the consolations of religion, and on the 25th of July, 1826, at three o'clock in the morning, a scaffold was raised on the rampart of the old fortress of St. Petersburg. Every regiment in garrison in the capital was ordered to send one company to witness the execution. The rolling of drums announced the arrival of the condemned; after they had heard their sentence read, they underwent military degradation, and mounted the fatal platform; but a dreadful episode attended this solemn tragedy. When the platform fell, Pestel and Kakhofski only were suspended in the air; the ropes had glided over the necks of the three others, and they fell through the scaffold, which it became necessary to reconstruct before they were launched into eternity. In this fearful interval Ryleieff exclaimed, "Nothing succeeds with me, not even death." Some instants afterwards the troops defiled in silence before the inanimate bodies; and the fifty-two accomplices sentenced to hard labour were immediately placed in travelling carts and hurried off to Siberia.

Some particulars may be added to this sad narrative, relating to the conduct and fate of the most eminent of the conspirators. The only one who acted a mean and degrading part was Prince Troubetzkoi. Having vainly sought to conceal himself, after fleeing from the scene of combat in the Isaac Square, he was brought into the presence of the emperor, and commanded to render an account of his conduct. At first he had the baseness to deny all participation in the conspiracy, when written evidence was placed in his hands convicting him of having accepted the office of Dictator. He then abjectly prayed that his life might be spared: "It shall be," replied Nicholas, "if you have the courage to sustain a dishonoured existence. Sit down and write to the princess, your wife, as I dictate: 'I am well, and have saved my life.'" Troubetzkoi obeyed. Widely different was the manly de-

meanour of Ryleieff when in presence of the emperor: "I knew beforehand," he said, "that this enterprise would ruin me, but I was unable any longer to behold my country under the yoke of despotism. But the seed I have sown will take root; and I do not doubt it will sooner or later bear its fruit." Michael Bestoujeff spoke the same sentiments: "I repent of nothing," he exclaimed; "I die content, and assured of being revenged." Nicholas compassionated Michael Bestoujeff, and said to him at an almost secret interview, "I might pardon you; and if I felt sure of possessing henceforth in you a faithful subject, I would do so." "Why, sire," replied Bestoujeff, "that is precisely what we complain of,—that the emperor can do any thing, and that he is bound by no law. In the name of God, allow justice to have free course; and let the fate of your subjects no longer depend on your caprice or your momentary impressions." Men of such courage and high-mindedness surely deserved success; but it was not so ordained:

" *Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*"

It has been beautifully said, "there is a silver lining to every cloud." On this melancholy occasion four Russian ladies of the highest birth, and born and bred in the lap of luxury, resolved to follow their exiled husbands to Siberia. Language cannot paint the heroism of such a sacrifice. They knew the dreadful privations they would have to endure in the most inclement of climates; but their resolution was inflexible. Their return to Europe was hopeless unless the Czar relented. Menial servitude was their future lot; their children would be slaves. But to every hardship, to every indignity they were resigned. It is the duty of history to record the names of these willing martyrs to conjugal affection. They were the Princess Troubetzkoi and Sergius Volkonski; and the untitled ladies, Naryschkin, Alexandrine and Nikita Mouravieff. Two young French girls, not united by the marriage-tie, also accompanied their lovers to Siberia. The fate of the first of these noble-minded women is peculiarly in-

teresting. In the days of their prosperity, her husband had shown her little attention, and had indeed treated her with coldness ; nor had any offspring blessed their nuptials : she bore, however, five children in exile, and petitioned Nicholas, when she became a mother, to remove herself and husband to the neighbourhood of any town in Siberia, where she might procure medical attendance to watch over the diseases of infancy ; but the petition was sternly refused. At the expiration of fifteen years she again approached the steps of the throne as a suppliant, that she might be allowed facilities for the education of her children. The Czar is said to have been highly indignant. “ What ! ” he exclaimed, “ two petitions from this infamous family ! the children of a convict, themselves convicts, need no education.” He could not appreciate the heroism of the wife or the tenderness of the mother, but visited the sins of the father on his innocent progeny ; yet Nicholas is lauded for his piety, and his rigid observance of all precepts of Christianity.

On the same day on which the conspirators were executed and the exiles were banished, a new imperial manifesto was published, which contained the following passages :—“ Henceforward let all fathers devote their whole attention to the moral education of their children. We must not attribute to civilisation that licentiousness of thought, that rampancy of the passions, that half-knowledge so confused and so fatal, that leaning to extreme theories and political visions, which commence by demoralising, and terminate by destroying,—but to a vanity and restlessness which leaves the mind empty and void of all solid instruction. In vain does the government make generous efforts, in vain does it exhaust itself in sacrifices, unless domestic education seconds its views and actions, by infusing into the heart of youth the germs of morality. A sudden revolt revealed to us seven months since a frightful secret concealed during ten years ; and it now behoves us to commemorate this discovery by a religious ceremony as an expiatory sacrifice for the blood shed in defence of religion, the sove-

reign, and the country ; we must offer a solemn thanksgiving to the Most High. We have recognised his omnipotent hand in tearing away the veil which shrouded this horrible mystery. We have recognised it in allowing crime to arm itself to ensure its defeat. Like a sudden tempest, the rebellion only broke out to annihilate the conspiracy."

On the morning of the 26th July, a religious ceremony, remarkable for its solemnity, was celebrated in presence of the whole garrison assembled on the Isaac Square. An altar was raised in its centre, and the Metropolitan Seraphim cleansed with consecrated water the scene of the combat, which produced a profound impression on the masses. The emperor and empress were in attendance. The crowd, deeply affected by the imposing spectacle, retired in silence ; and many were convinced that the attempt to subvert the throne had strengthened its foundations.

REIGN OF NICHOLAS THE FIRST.

Nicholas Paulovitch was born in 1796, and on the 1st July, 1817, married the Princess Charlotte of Prussia, daughter of King Frederick William the Third. The new grand-duchess, according to the usage of the Russian court, adopted the religion of the Russo-Greek Church, and took the name of Alexandra Feodorowna. During the life of the Emperor Alexander, Nicholas lived rather like a private gentleman than a prince of the blood royal ; confining himself to his palace of Anitchkof, and rigidly performing the duties of inspector-general of engineers, intrusted to him by his imperial brother.

Alexander, as has been stated, was a decided liberal in his early life ; and if the testimony of Napoleon is to be literally interpreted, he was a democrat, doubting whether he ought to wear a crown. Nicholas has never been suspected of any tendency to constitutional government, but his love of absolute power has been invariably manifested from his accession to the throne. He ascended its steps streaming with blood ; and the commencement

of his reign impressed him with a horror of all revolutionary movements. In his eyes, the freedom of the press was a crime, and representative government the rule of lawlessness and corruption. His principle was, to concentrate all power in an individual, and invest him with the plenary and irresponsible functions of autocracy. He has revealed his inner life and personal views as a politician in the following conversation with the Marquis de Custine :

“ ‘ I can comprehend a republic,’ said the emperor ; ‘ it is a plain and sincere government, or at least it can be so. I can comprehend absolute monarchy, since I am at the head of a similar order of things ; but I have no conception of a representative monarchy. It is the government of falsehood, fraud, corruption ; and rather than adopt it, I would fall back to the borders of China.’ ‘ Sire, I have always considered the representative government as an inevitable compromise in certain societies at certain periods ; but, like all compromises, it resolves no question, it adjourns no difficulties.’ The emperor seemed to say, proceed. I continued : ‘ It is a truce signed between democracy and monarchy, under the auspices of two very low tyrants, fear and interest ; and prolonged by pride of talent, which delights in loquacity, and by the popular vanity, which pays itself with words. In short, it is the autocracy of speech substituted for that of birth ; for it is the government of lawyers.’ ‘ Sir, you speak with truth,’ said the emperor, grasping my hand : ‘ I have been a representative sovereign ;* and the world knows what it has cost me, because I would not submit to the exigencies of that *infamous* government (I am repeating literally). To buy votes, to bribe consciences, to seduce some in order to delude others,—all these forms I disdained, as debasing for those who obey as well as for him who commands ; and dearly have I paid for my frankness. But, God be praised, I have done for ever with that odious political machine. Never will I again be a constitutional king. It is too

* In Poland.

much my nature to say what I think for me ever to consent to reign over any nation by craft or by intrigue.'

"The name of Poland, which incessantly occurred to our minds, was not mentioned in this curious conversation."

Nicholas was crowned Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias on the 3d September, 1826. The ceremonial was most imposing. Invention exhausted itself in adding magnificence to solemnity. With a view to public tranquillity, it was of the deepest importance that all doubts as to the legality of the succession should be removed, and that any secret sympathy with the cause espoused by the late conspirators should be effectually dissipated. To consolidate this policy on a visible and durable basis, and to silence in the future even a whisper that Nicholas was a usurper, the Grand Duke Constantine quitted Warsaw, and arrived at the old capital of Russia. The emperor advanced, uncovered, walking between his two brothers, to the altar, where he was received by the Metropolitan Seraphim, who was attended by the Archbishops of Moscow and Kief, and there received the cross, which he kissed. Two splendid thrones, glittering with jewels, had been prepared. The one, destined for Nicholas, had been given by the Armenians of Ispahan to the Czar Alexis Mikailovitch; the other, appropriated to the empress, had been the seat of Michael Feodorovitch, founder of the dynasty of Romanoff. Constantine bent his knee in homage to his brother; the emperor immediately clasped him in his arms. At that instant the great bell of the tower of Ivan Veliki sounded, and a hundred cannon announced that the ceremony was completed.

The oath of allegiance was formally taken, and with real or apparent enthusiasm, at Moscow, Warsaw, and in the military colonies. To the troops cantoned in these last districts Nicholas addressed a special order of the day in the following terms:—
"Deeply impressed with the beneficent idea which called into existence the military colonies, I will strengthen their foundations and promote their welfare; and, as a testimony of my good will,

I present the uniform worn by the late Emperor Alexander, and confide it to the custody of the regiment of grenadiers of Count Araktcheieff, as the first placed on the colonial establishment."

In his manifesto to Poland, where the revolutionary fire was still smouldering, he announced his accession to the throne in the following terms: "Poles, we have stated our intention to continue the policy adopted by the late emperor and king, Alexander, of gracious memory. The constitution given to you will be maintained; and I promise and swear before God to uphold and carry into execution with all my power the constitutional charter." The Grand Duke Constantine, who remained Viceroy of Poland, addressed his brother in a document intended for publicity, in which the following passages occur:—"The decrees of God are fulfilled: if I have in any degree co-operated in their accomplishment, I have only fulfilled my duty—the duty of a faithful subject, of a devoted brother, of a true Russian, whose glory it is to obey God and his sovereign. The Omnipotent, who protects the destinies of Russia, its laws, and the majesty of the throne, will, in his mercy, sire, be your guide, and enlighten you by his wisdom. If my most zealous efforts can contribute to lighten the burden which God has imposed on you, I hasten to carry to the feet of your throne the homage of my unbounded devotion, of my fidelity, of my submission, of my anxiety to execute the will of your Imperial Majesty. I pray the Most High that his holy and inscrutable providence may watch over the health of your majesty, so precious to all; that he may give you length of days; that your glory, the glory of your crown, may be perpetuated from generation to generation."

THE AFFAIRS OF GREECE.

On the death of Alexander, friendly relations existed between Russia and the Western Powers; but various disagreements with the Ottoman Porte threatened to kindle the flames. Russia com-

plained that the Turks had not fulfilled the conditions of the treaty of Bucharest. By virtue of that treaty, Russia acquired the mouths of the Danube, Bessarabia, and that part of Moldavia which lies to the east of the Pruth ; and it further stipulated to bestow several religious privileges on the Christian population of Moldavia and Wallachia. Russia had complained during the reign of Alexander that Turkey had not performed those stipulations which related to her Christian subjects ; and Turkey retorted that Russia had not surrendered certain fortresses in the Black Sea, to which she was bound by the treaty of Bucharest. The Porte also charged her ancient enemy with fomenting rebellion in Greece. The Congress of Verona had formally acknowledged the right of the sultan to exclude all foreign intervention between himself and his subjects, whether Christian or Mahometan ; but the Emperor Nicholas soon showed a disposition to nullify that contract, by claiming, as head of the Greek Church, a spiritual protectorate over the Christians within the Ottoman dominions. On this plea, falsely drawn from the treaty of Kaidnarji, he sought to evade the obligations which were binding on the Western Powers, and insisted on the separate and exclusive right of discussing points of difference with Turkey.

A sanguinary contest was raging between Greece and the Ottoman Porte. The feelings of educated men throughout Europe were strongly in favour of the former, as one of the ancient seats of science, art, and learning ; while Christendom, from religious motives, sympathised with its misfortunes, and prayed for the downfall of the Crescent and the exaltation of the Cross. Russia, faithful to her traditional policy, took advantage of all these circumstances to undermine the throne of the sultan. Her agents were active in fomenting rebellion, by promising substantial aid in money and troops. The Greek priests were bribed, and services of plate sent to the monasteries. High and low believed in the restoration of the Byzantine Empire. England, however, did not share in these illusions ; and Mr. Canning pre-

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vailed on the Duke of Wellington, who represented his Britannic Majesty at the coronation of Nicholas, to sound the views of the Czar on the impending struggle. The late revolt induced farsighted politicians to believe that, irrespective of the desire to weaken Turkey, the Russian emperor might be tempted to undertake a popular war as a means of removing any seditious feelings that might still linger in the army. The Duke of Wellington expressed to Count Nesselrode the indignation and sorrow of the Court of St. James's at the atrocities perpetrated in the Morea after the debarcation of the troops of Ibrahim Pasha, and its desire to terminate the contest by a common action and interference, before Egypt could render effective aid to the sultan. After this preliminary conversation with the Russian minister, the duke had several private interviews with the emperor, when the great question of the East was formally discussed; and then it was ascertained that the policy of Nicholas essentially differed from that of Alexander.

The emperor drew at once and markedly a broad line of distinction between the individual interests of Russia and the international differences which the allied powers might be called upon to regulate and adjust by their united action. By this pretension he claimed to interfere in common with the other powers of Europe when it suited his policy, and to exclude them from all joint mediation when their co-operation militated against his own views. He did not pretend to any exclusive intervention in the affairs of Greece, although, as he adroitly observed, a religious question was involved,—thus affecting a moderation which he secretly repudiated; but he added that he only made this concession on the distinct understanding that the powers would undertake to rescue the Greeks from the ferocity of their enemies, and henceforth support with greater energy the Christian interests in the East. As to what might concern Russia individually, the emperor positively rejected all foreign intervention. He justified this course by a reference to anterior treaties; submitting that he

only claimed rights long since ignored or violated by Turkey, reserving to himself the occasion and the means of recovering them, but pledging himself not to compromise the existence of the Ottoman empire. Whatever opinion may be formed of the justice of these views, it is impossible not to respect the sincerity with which they were avowed. Europe, or at least England, was not left in the dark as to the future conduct of Russia,—its ambition was revealed; and the opportunity alone was wanted to reduce Turkey into vassalage, and elevate the Czar to the throne of the Sultan.

On the 4th of April, 1826, a few days before his departure from St. Petersburg, the Duke of Wellington signed, with Count Nesselrode, the first protocol relative to the affairs of Greece; and ultimately that protocol led to two important results, though different in their nature. The first was the celebrated treaty of London, concluded on the 6th July, 1827, between England, France, and Russia; the second was the convention of Akerman, in Bessarabia, adjusted between Russia and Turkey. By that convention Russia obtained from the Ottoman Porte all she deemed it prudent to exact at that critical juncture; but ordinary penetration has no difficulty in detecting in that arrangement the germ of the treaty of Adrianople. The ostensible object of the convention of Akerman was to secure the exact fulfilment of the treaty of Bucharest; and it bound the sultan, first, to grant to the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, within six months at the latest, all the rights and privileges specified in the Hatti-Sheriff of 1802; secondly, to guarantee to Servia all its former privileges, to augment them by new advantages, and, by a particular Hatti-Sheriff, to define in detail all the rights of the Servians, according to a mutual agreement with the Russian court; thirdly, to satisfy the claims of Russian subjects on the Turkish government; fourthly, to accord to Russian commerce in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean the most perfect liberty, under no pretence whatever impeding the navigation of merchantmen sailing

under the Russian flag on the waters of the Ottoman empire, or hindering the vessels of the powers in alliance with Russia from entering the Black Sea ; fifthly, it was stipulated that the Asiatic boundary between the two empires should remain exactly in the same state as it was at the conclusion of the convention, and that Turkey should give up all pretensions to the different forts conquered by the Russians beyond the Caucasus in the former war. The Turkish government, however, has publicly asserted, referring to the protocols in verification of the assertion, that it signed the convention on the express understanding that Russia should renounce all interference in the affairs of Greece ; and this has never been publicly denied.*

The treaty of London really created the modern kingdom of Greece. It proposed to the Ottoman Porte the mediation of England, France, and Russia ; and unless accepted within a month, it declared that it would not tolerate the continuance of a state of things which had disturbed the East for six years, but accredit consular agents in Greece, and receive from Greece consular agents in their own countries. It also proposed an armistice pending negotiations. Finally, if the Turkish government would not listen to any terms of accommodation, or if the Greeks refused to accept the conditions proposed, the high contracting powers would instruct their representatives in London to determine what ulterior measures might be necessary. The treaty of London, however, still reserved to the sultan the suzerainté of Greece and a yearly tribute from that country. The ambassadors of the three powers, in communicating to the Porte the stipulations of the treaty of London, intimated the necessity under which they would be placed, if the Turkish government should persist in rejecting their mediation, “ of recurring to such measures as they should judge most efficacious for putting an end to a state of things which was become incompatible even with the true interests of the

* Progress and Present Position of Russia in the East, p. 79. Third edition. John Murray.

Sublime Porte, with the security of commerce in general, and with the perfect tranquillity of Europe.” Turkey regarded that note as a declaration of war, and prepared for the defence of Constantinople. Ibrahim, son of Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, commander-in-chief of the Ottoman forces in Egypt, spared neither age nor sex, burning towns, devastating the fields, and even rooting up the olive-trees. Then followed the fatal victory of Navarino, in which England and France were the dupes of Russia, as the destruction of the Turkish fleet rendered the Czar master of the Black Sea. The sultan demanded satisfaction for the loss he had sustained, and reparation for his wounded honour; declaring that until he received satisfaction he could hold no intercourse with the ambassadors of the three powers, who withdrew from Constantinople in December 1827.

The secret policy of Russia was soon made manifest. She proposed “to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia in the name of the three powers,” and even to march an army into Turkey, “dictating peace under the walls of the seraglio.” France and England refused their assent to these violent measures, on which Russia declared, “that in the manner of executing the treaty of London she will consult her own interests and convenience;” but this haughty menace she was compelled to retract.

WAR WITH PERSIA.

Contemporaneously with these events, war broke out between Russia and Persia. The latter power complained that General Yermoloff, the Governor-general of Georgia, had violated the Persian territory. The frontier line had not been correctly settled at the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813, and during twelve years it had been a subject of discussion and remonstrance; the possession of the districts on the right or southern bank of the Araxes being one of the disputed claims. Persia had for many years nurtured a secret enmity to Russia; and the revolt which followed the death of Alexander seemed to furnish a favourable opportu-

nity for recovering some provinces which had been wrested by force of arms. Prince Abbas Mirza, son of the Shah, was the head of the war party. He was talented and brave. The Persian army had been re-organised; and the prince, envious of rivaling the fame of Shah Nadir, who had raised his country to the pinnacle of greatness, was eager to measure his strength with that of Russia. He suddenly invaded Georgia; while his brother, Ali Mirza, at the head of 12,000 men, operated a diversion on the shores of the Caspian. The expedition was skilfully arranged and boldly executed. Georgia trembled; and at Tiflis, the capital of the province, such was the terror of the inhabitants, that they buried their treasures in the earth. Abbas Mirza crossed the Araxes at the head of 35,000 men, stirred up the khanats of Karabakch, Shirvan, Bakou, and Shekii, and seized several towns, after having turned the chain of the Caucasus. He then marched rapidly to Elisavetpol, hoping there to unite with the *Sirdar* of Erivan, and forcibly entering Georgia, take possession of Tiflis. But this plan was deranged by the valiant resistance of the fortress of Shusha, seated on the road to Karabakch; and the prince, not daring to leave that stronghold in his rear, besieged it in form with his whole army. He ordered his brother, Mahmet Mirza, to advance to Elisavetpol, which soon surrendered to the Persians; and this division, then co-operating with the *Sirdar* of Erivan, moved forward to the banks of the Kur. However, Shusha, though repeatedly assaulted, repelled its assailants; and the determined valour of that brave garrison enabled the Russians to concentrate their scattered forces, and push on to Kakhetia. The Russian general, Prince Madatoff, attacked Mahmet Mirza near the river Shamkora, and routed him; the Persians fled beyond Elisavetpol, which was at once recovered by the Russians. Abbas Mirza then abandoned the siege of Shusha, and marched on Elisavetpol, under the walls of which city he encountered the now famous Paskievitch, by whom he was signally defeated; and the Persians fled across the Araxes.

The Shah, however, would not listen to peace. A second campaign was opened in the spring of 1827. The Russian army was reinforced, and ordered to march to the frontiers of Persia. The main object of attack was Erivan, which Abbas Mirza regarded as the bulwark of his country. It succumbed to the arms of Paskievitch; and, by the end of October 1827, the whole province of Aderbidjan was occupied by Russian troops. Abbas Mirza then opened negotiations for peace; but his real object was to gain time: for he confidently expected that Turkey would declare war; and in that hope he was confirmed by intelligence of the battle of Navarino. He succeeded in protracting any settlement of the terms of pacification till January 1828; and in this policy he was secretly aided by the Shah, who wrote to Paskievitch that the prince had no authority to accept conditions humiliating to Persia, and that he himself would send plenipotentiaries extraordinary to Tauris. But the patience of the Russian general was exhausted, his suspicions were excited; he broke off pacific relations; and, in spite of the inclement season, passed the mountains and marched directly to Teheran. This decisive movement put an end to hostilities, and peace was signed in Feb. 1828 at Turcomanchai. The treaty which was signed was most disastrous to Persia.

“In the negotiations which led to the treaty of Turcomanchai, by which this war was terminated (Feb. 1828), Russia, while she disclaimed all desire of conquest, and repelled as injurious every imputation of an ambitious desire to aggrandise her territory, which she said was already as extensive as she could desire, declared that her anxiety to prevent any future collision with Persia compelled her to establish a frontier-line so well defined, as to leave no room for doubt or discussion hereafter; and as this could be found only on the Arras (Araxes), she had no alternative but to adopt the line of that river.

“Persia, besides paying the whole expenses of the war, was, therefore, called upon to cede the important and wealthy provinces of Erivan and Nukhchivan, including the fortresses of Eri-

van and Abbasabad ; because it was necessary to the future tranquillity of the two empires, that their common frontier should be defined by the Araxes. The sacrifice to Persia was immense ; but she was in no condition to renew the war ; and she consoled herself with the belief that this arrangement, while it took from her possessions infinitely more valuable, would at least give her back Talish and Moghan, from which the Russians had been driven by the revolt of the inhabitants in the commencement of the war, and which they had not been able to re-occupy. But this was not consistent with the views of Russia ; and though these districts were of no real value to her, and even caused her a considerable yearly expenditure, she refused to relinquish her claim to them ; treated with contempt every allusion to the promise of General Ritescheff ; and when reminded that she had herself required the cession by Persia of Erivan and Nukhchivan, for the sole object of establishing the Arras as the frontier-line, and was now violating the principle she had laid down, her only answer was a threat to break off the negotiations, and recommence hostilities. Persia had no alternative, and submitted.

“ The object of Russia in securing this position is sufficiently obvious. The Arras is fordable, at short intervals, from the vicinity of Julfa (near the great road between Erivan and Tabreez) to a ford called Yeddee Bolook ; but below that point it is never fordable. By retaining Talish and Moghan, she has secured to herself possessions beyond the Arras extending southward to the frontier of Ghilan, from the point where the river ceases to be fordable to its mouth on the Caspian Sea ; and has thus laid open one of the most valuable parts of Persia to an attack at any season of the year, and placed herself in a position from which she can occupy Ghilan with most facility. That she retains her views on this rich province, is sufficiently proved by the fact that she threatened only two years ago (1834) to occupy it as a security for the payment of 500,000 tomans (250,000*l.*) of indemnity still due to her by Persia.

“The possession of Talish and Moghan cannot be pretended to be of any real value to Russia, beyond the facility it affords for future aggressions; and that in this point of view it is of the greatest importance is demonstrated by the fact, that from the natural strength of the country, and the hostile spirit of the inhabitants, she was unable to re-establish her authority there, after the conclusion of peace, without the aid of the Persian government.

“In the province of Nukhchivan ceded to Russia, and on the left bank of the Araxes, is the fortress of Abbasabad, constructed by a French engineer in the service of the late Abbas Mirza. Russia, not content with the fortress, demanded possession of an unfinished work intended for a *tête-du-pont* on the opposite bank, which she represented as a part of the fortress, though no bridge had ever been constructed; and having obtained this unfinished and untenable outwork, founded on the concession another demand. The intended *tête-du-pont* to an imaginary bridge required an esplanade; and a segment of a circle, with a radius of two miles, was assigned to her for this purpose.

“This second position beyond the Araxes opens to her an entrance into Persia on the other flank of the frontier, and at the nearest point of that frontier to the fortress of Khoé, the most important of all that now remain to Persia. It commands the only available line of communication between Persia and Turkey, the only road by which their commerce can pass, and consequently that by which the British trade with Persia is carried on. Its importance has not escaped the observation of Russia; she selected it as the place which she was to hold in pledge for the payment of the last instalment of the indemnity which was necessary to procure the final evacuation of the Persian territories by the Russian troops. She therefore held it during her war with Turkey in 1828, and felt its value in separating from one another the Persian and Ottoman dominions; but on the payment of the stipulated sum, she was reluctantly compelled to surrender it.

“By the treaty of Turcomanchai, Persia was again bound to

maintain no navy on the Caspian : this stipulation was now made to rest on the prescriptive right of Russia to the exclusive privilege of having a navy on that sea, which the treaty declares she had enjoyed *ab antiquo*. This, however, was an antiquity of only thirteen years ; for she acquired the exclusive right by the treaty of Goolistan, which was concluded in 1814.”*

WAR WITH TURKEY.

Scarcely two months had elapsed since the treaty of Turcomanчай was signed, when war was declared by Russia against Turkey. The official document announcing hostilities is of the highest historical importance, and many passages in it shed a bright light over the whole of this epoch. It requires, therefore, to be quoted at some length.

“ Sixteen years,” it says, “ have elapsed since the peace of Bucharest ; and during those sixteen years the Porte has infringed the stipulations by which it was bound, evaded its promises, or interposed interminable delays in their performance. On the day that the ministers of the three powers quitted Constantinople, they expressed a lively desire for the preservation of peace. On the day that the Porte also proclaimed its pacific intentions, it called to arms against Russia all the peoples who profess the Mahometan religion ; and avowing that it only negotiated to prepare for battle, and never intended to fulfil the essential articles of the Convention of Akerman, declared that it only concluded that convention with the intention of violating it. The Porte, in doing so, was not ignorant that this amounted to a violation of all anterior treaties, as the Convention of Akerman stipulated for their renewal ; but it had previously determined its line of conduct.

“ Immediately the privileges of the Russian flag were violated, the ships which it covered were detained, their cargoes seized, their captains compelled to surrender them for a price arbitrarily fixed ; the payment was slow, and one-half of the real value ; and the subjects of his Imperial Majesty were forced to descend to the

* Progress of Russia in the East.

condition of rayahs, or quit in mass the Ottoman territory. The Bosphorus was closed, the commerce of the Black Sea enchained, the ruin of Russian towns was imminent; and the southern provinces of the dominions of the emperor lost the sole market for their produce,—the sole trading communications which, by facilitating exchanges, could reward labour, and raise industry to wealth. Russia will not dwell at any length on the motives which authorise her no longer to tolerate such acts of manifest hostility, or which justify her in preventing their recurrence.

“ The peace of 1812 was scarcely signed, when the Porte hoped to avail itself with impunity of the difficult circumstances in which Russia was then placed, by multiplying the infractions of engagements to which she was pledged. An amnesty had been promised to the Servians; but their country was invaded and ravaged. Immunities were guaranteed to Moldavia and Wallachia; a system of spoliation completed the ruin of those unfortunate provinces. The incursions of the hordes who dwelt upon the left bank of the Kouban were to be repressed by the authority of the Porte; but they were vigorously encouraged. And in reference to several fortresses indispensable to the safety of our Asiatic territories, Turkey, not content with raising pretensions to their occupation, which she acknowledges to be groundless by the Convention of Akerman, rendered those pretensions doubly inadmissible, by favouring on the coasts of the Black Sea, and even in our immediate neighbourhood, the traffic in slaves, rapine, and every kind of disorder. There is yet more to be told: then, as at present, vessels bearing the Russian flag were seized in the Bosphorus; and all the stipulations of the treaty of commerce of 1783 were openly violated.

“ A general rising in the Morea, and the irruption into Moldavia of the chief of a party faithless to his duties, roused in the Turkish government and nation all the transports of a blind hatred against the Christians, their tributaries, without distinction between the innocent and the guilty. Russia marked with just

reprobation the enterprise of Prince Ypsilanti; it authorised, as the protecting power of both nations, the measures of defence and legitimate repression adopted by the Divan; at the same time pointing out the necessity of not confounding the inoffensive population with the fomenters of disturbance, whom it was necessary to disarm and punish. These counsels were rejected; the representative of his Imperial Majesty was insulted in his own house; the most eminent of the Greek clergy, and the patriarch who was their head, underwent, in the midst of the solemnities of our holy religion, an ignominious punishment. All who were distinguished among Christians were seized, plundered, massacred without trial, except those who escaped by flight. However, the fire of the insurrection, far from being quenched, spread in all directions. In vain did the Russian minister attempt to render to the Porte a last service, by his note of the 16th of July, 1821; he pointed out the course of conciliation and safety. After having protested against crimes and furies unparalleled in history, he was obliged to obey the orders of his sovereign and quit Constantinople.

“ A new reign commenced. On his accession to the throne, the Emperor Nicholas opened negotiations with the Porte, with a view to adjust several differences in which Russia alone was interested; and at length, on the 4th April, 1826, in concert with his majesty the king of Great Britain, laid down the basis of an intervention demanded by the general welfare. On the one hand, his imperial majesty, hoping from the union of the great courts the more prompt cessation of the war which stains the East with blood, abandoned all isolated influence, threw aside all exclusive notions in this important question; on the other hand, by his direct negotiations with the Divan, he endeavoured once more to remove all obstacles to a reconciliation between the Turks and Greeks. Under such auspices, the conference at Akerman was opened. It terminated by annexing an additional article to the treaty of Bucharest. The establishment of a permanent ministerial mission at Constantinople followed this arrangement; and in

a short time the treaty of the 6th July, 1827, consecrated before the world those maxims of disinterestedness, of which the protocol of the 29th April attests the good faith. The most friendly means were employed to induce the Porte to acquiesce in the terms of this salutary transaction. Frank communications, which placed undisguisedly before its eyes the plans of the three courts, warned it that, in case of refusal, their united fleets would be compelled to put an end to a struggle which had become incompatible with the safe navigation of the seas, the wants of commerce, and the civilisation of the rest of Europe. The Porte paid no attention to these warnings. A commander of the Ottoman troops, immediately after the conclusion of a provisional armistice, violated his word, and finished by appealing to arms. Then took place the battle of Navarino, the necessary result of a want of faith, and of an unjustifiable aggression ; but that battle furnished to Russia and its allies the opportunity of expressing to the Divan their desire of maintaining peace on solid guarantees.

“ Such is the system, such are the arts to which the Porte has replied by its manifesto of the 20th December, and by measures which constitute so many infractions of the treaty with Russia, so many insults to her rights, so many grave attacks on commercial prosperity, so many proofs of its desire to create embarrassments to Russia, and to stir up enemies against her. Thus placed in a position in which her honour and her suffering interests do not allow her to remain, Russia declares war against the Ottoman Porte, not without regret, but after having omitted nothing during sixteen consecutive years to spare it the fatal consequences of hostilities. Provoked by Turkey, this war will throw upon it the burden of compensating the losses sustained by the subjects of his Imperial Majesty, undertaken to restore to their pristine vigour the treaties that the Porte considers not binding ; it will guarantee their observance and efficacy, promoted by the imperious need of securing to the trade of the Black Sea and to the navigation of the Bosphorus a freedom henceforward inviolable ;

it will be directed to that end, useful in common to all the states of Europe. In appealing to arms, Russia, far from being animated by feelings of hatred to the Ottoman Porte, as the Divan accuses it of being, or of meditating its downfall, considers that it affords a convincing proof that, if it desired to wage war to the knife and subvert the throne of the Sultan, it might have availed itself of the frequent opportunities of war which its relations with the Porte have unceasingly presented."

This document furnishes a clear and ample exposition of Russian policy ; but it blends truth with falsehood ; and while it professes honesty of purpose, veils duplicity. After the battle of Navarino, the sultan, surrounded by enemies, and feeling his position desperate, wrote to the pashas of the provinces, and appealed to Turkish patriotism and nationality to defend their country and their religion. There may have been rashness in thus defying the three powers ; still the fortitude that bears up against adverse fortune commands praise ; but in his address to his people, Mahmoud confessed that in signing the Convention of Akerman his only object was to gain time, as he never intended to fulfil its conditions. Such mental reservation is not justifiable ; but it ought not to have been condemned by the Emperor of Russia, who, by the same convention, had expressly declared that he would not interfere in the Greek question, and yet the Russian fleet fought at Navarino. Now Russia and Turkey alone were parties to the Convention of Akerman, as France and England were not included in its arrangements ; Turkey, therefore, was released from her contract, because it was broken by Russia. Nevertheless, the Reis Effendi attempted to explain away this offensive part of the appeal made to the pashas, and expressed a desire to renew friendly relations with the Court of St. Petersburg ; but the plausible opportunity long desired for attacking the Ottoman empire presented itself, and it was seized upon with avidity. Russia was anxious for a private quarrel, in which the other powers of Europe could not pretend to interfere ; and hence

she insisted specially that the Convention of Akerman guaranteed and confirmed all previous treaties, from that of Kaidnarji in 1774.

The declaration of war was published at St. Petersburg on the 4th April, 1828. The campaign was opened on the same day, and Turkey was assailed by land and sea, both in Europe and in Asia. Count Wittgenstein invaded Moldavia and Wallachia, and crossed the Danube. Count Paskievitch poured his troops into the Asiatic provinces. Prince Menschikoff, with a separate division, was instructed to capture Anapa. Admiral Greig, with a fleet in the Black Sea, was to co-operate with the army in the reduction of the maritime fortresses in Bulgaria, Roumelia, and on the eastern shore of the Euxine. Admiral Heyden was to close the passage of the Dardanelles, to intercept aid from Egypt. This extended plan had been long matured while the terms of peace were negotiating.

Towards the end of April, the main army, consisting of 115,000 men, crossed the Pruth, and Jassy and Bucharest were almost immediately taken, without more than a nominal resistance. The emperor was present when the Danube was crossed, that his appearance might encourage the troops. The Grand Duke Michael directed the siege of Brailoff, which resisted bravely, and only submitted after repeated assaults, in which the losses of the Russians were severe. It yielded on the 3d of June. The Turks had established an extensive camp at Shumla, and on that point concentrated 40,000 men under the Seraskier Hussein Pasha. It was necessary for the Russians to capture that position or hem in the garrison, otherwise the siege of Varna could not have been prosecuted with prudence. Accordingly Count Wittgenstein was ordered to remain under Shumla and watch the movements of Hussein.

On the 27th of August, the emperor established his personal head-quarters on board of a man-of-war in front of Varna. On the 10th of September the besieged sallied forth, but, after a

desperate struggle, were forced to retire. The Russian navy, having the command of the sea, kept up an incessant cannonade. On the 20th September the mines were sprung, and a practical breach made in the walls. On the 23d and 24th the attack was ready to be executed, when the governor, Yousouf Pasha, either considering resistance useless or bribed by the Russians, opened negotiations, and capitulated on the 2d of October, 1828. The siege lasted two months and a half. The Turkish troops were now compelled to cross the Balkan; but at Shumala they acted on the offensive, and it was only after considerable losses that General Roudzevitch succeeded in repulsing them, but he failed to carry their intrenched camp. As the cold season advanced, the Russian army went into winter quarters, and the emperor retired to Odessa.

Paskievitch had been eminently successful in Asia, and had prevented the Turks from concentrating their forces in the north of their empire. He seized the fortresses of Kars and Akhalhaliki; then marching to Akhaltzic, he made himself master of that town, after having defeated 30,000 Ottomans under its walls. Other important though minor places yielded to his arms; but the falling snow blocking up the roads, compelled him to return to Tiflis.

These military results were foreseen by the European cabinets, and diplomacy exerted itself to avert the downfall of Turkey. Prince Metternich, who directed the foreign policy of Austria, alarmed at the extension of Russian power in the East, endeavoured to persuade England, France, and Austria unitedly to intervene and stay the progress of the Emperor Nicholas; but Count Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian ambassador at Paris, frustrated the views of Austria, which England would have readily adopted; and the Czar, fully instructed of what was maturing, resumed hostilities at a much earlier date than was expected. Count Diebitch, appointed commander-in-chief, reached the head-quarters at Jassy on the 8th February, 1829; and Reschid Pasha took the



PASS IN THE BALKANS IN OUBBOVA : A POLICE STATION ON THE ROCK.

command at Shumla, where 100,000 Ottomans were stationed. The Russians, divided into two columns, crossed the Danube in the beginning of April. On the 5th of May they blockaded Silistria. After a protracted defence it opened its gates to General Krasovski. In the middle of May, Reschid marched out of Shumla with 40,000 troops; and besieged Pravodui. Information of this movement was forwarded to Diebitch, who, in five days, stood in the rear of the Vizier, cutting him off from Shumla. A battle ensued in the defiles of Kulevtch; it commenced at noon and lasted till evening, both parties holding their ground; it was renewed on the following morning, when the Turks were routed, leaving on the field 5000 dead, their baggage, artillery, and standards. Reschid with difficulty reached Shumla. This victory led to important consequences. To protect Shumla, now much in danger, the Vizier sent several detachments of the army that were defending the mountainous passes by which the route of the Balkan was opened. The Russian commander now only awaited the fall of Silistria, which ultimately surrendered to General Krasovski; Diebitch then crossed the Balkan and advanced to Adrianople, his right flank being supported by the squadron in the Archipelago commanded by Admiral Heyden, and his left by the fleet in the Black Sea.

In Asia, Paskievitch was equally successful. He defeated the Seraskier of Erzeroum, and shortly afterwards his lieutenant, Hagki Pasha, who was advancing to the aid of his chief with reinforcements. The Turks fell back on the mountain-gorges and forests which border the basin of the Araxes, and there might have made a stand against the enemy; but Hagki Pasha had been made prisoner, and the troops had lost their courage and discipline. The victorious Paskievitch crossed the Saganeook Mountains, which separated him from Erzeroum; but on the 27th June, 1829, that important city surrendered: the seraskier was there shut up with several pashas, all of whom were made prisoners. Paskievitch now made preparations for marching against

Trebizond, when he received intelligence of the peace signed at Adrianople.

Such are the leading events in this memorable war, which prostrated Turkey, and cost immense sacrifices to Russia. Pestilence had decimated the Russian ranks, especially in the first of the two campaigns. Their losses in men and horses were enormous ; for of the former there perished 140,000, and of the latter 50,000, either by disease or the fire of the Turks. The army of Diebitch, at Adrianople, was too enfeebled to advance to Constantinople ; and had the sultan been well informed, or his troops less dispirited, the Russians would never have recrossed the Balkan, but fallen an easy prey to the Ottoman scymitar.

When the Emperor Nicholas declared war against Turkey, he publicly disclaimed all intention of aggrandising his dominions, thus seeking to lull the suspicions or jealousy of Europe ; but, as in other instances, he belied his promises. The fourth article of the treaty of Adrianople, signed on the 14th September, 1829, contains the following stipulations :*—“ Georgia, Imeretia, Gou-

* “ Article 3. The Pruth shall continue to form the boundary of the empires,—from the point where that river touches the territory of Moldavia as far as its confluence with the Danube. From this place the frontier-line shall follow the source of the Danube as far as the embouchure of St. George ; so that while leaving all the islands formed by the different branches of this river in the possession of Russia, the right bank will remain, as heretofore, in that of the Ottoman Porte. It is nevertheless agreed that this right bank, commencing from the point where the St. George branch separates from that of the Sulina branch, shall remain uninhabited to the distance of two hours* from the river, and that no establishment of any kind whatsoever shall be formed thereon ; and that, in like manner, it shall not be permitted to make any establishment or construct any fortification on the islands, which shall remain in possession of the court of Russia, excepting always the quarantine which shall be thereon established. The merchant vessels of the two powers shall be competent to navigate the Danube through its whole course, and those which bear the Ottoman flag may freely enter the Kili and Sulina embouchures ; that of

* Two hours of time are computed as equal to six miles of distance.

riel, and several other provinces of the Caucasus, having been for many years, and in perpetuity, united to the empire of Russia; and that empire having besides, by the treaty concluded with Persia at Turcomanchai, acquired the khanats of Erivan and Nukchivan, the two high contracting parties having recognised the necessity of establishing between the respective states, on the whole of that line, a well-determined frontier, capable of preventing all future discussion,—they have equally taken into consideration the proper means to oppose insurmountable obstacles to the incursions and depredations which the neighbouring nations or tribes have hitherto committed, and which have so often compromised the relations of friendship and good feeling of the two empires; consequently, it has been agreed upon to consider henceforward, as the frontier between the territories of the imperial court of Russia and those of the Sublime Porte in Asia, the line which, following the present limit of Gouriél from the Black Sea, ascends as far as the border of Imeretia, and thence in the straightest direction as far as the point where the frontiers of Akhilkillak and of Kars meet those of Georgia, leaving in this manner, to the north of and within that line, the town of Akhaltzic, and the fort of Kalnalic, at a distance of not less than two hours. All the countries situate to the north and west of this line of demarcation, towards the pachaliks of Kars and Trebizond, together with the major part of the pachalik of Akhilkillak, shall remain in perpetuity under the dominion of the Sublime Porte; whilst those which are situated to the north and east of the said line, towards Georgia, Imeretia, and Gouriél, as well as all the littoral of the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Kouban as far as the port of St. Nicholas inclusively, shall remain under the dominion of the Emperor of Russia.”

These articles abundantly prove that the real object of the

St. George remaining common to the war and merchant flags of the two contracting powers. But the Russian ships of war must not, in sailing up the Danube, go beyond the place of junction with the Pruth.”

Emperor Nicholas was territorial aggrandisement. His policy has ever been prospective—not seizing the pear till it is ripe; and he has succeeded in lulling suspicion by the outward semblance of frankness and moderation. His ultimate object in the second article was to ruin the corn-growing districts of Moldavia and Wallachia, and secure a monopoly for Odessa. When the Turks had possession of the Sulina Canal of the Danube, they did not allow the water to fall below sixteen feet; under Russia, it was reduced to eight feet; and the passage is now closed, to the deep injury of Braila and Galatz.

The fourth article, which relates to Georgia and the Caucasus, is even more important than the second; as its object was not only to bring the Russians nearer to Anatolia, but to strengthen its position against Persia, when some new opportunity might arise for striking a blow in that direction. It is necessary, therefore, to record more in detail the connection between Russia and Georgia from an earlier date. The Georgians pretend to trace their origin to Noah, who, according to their traditions, gave their country to them. It was seized by Persia, conquered by Alexander the Great, and at his death recovered by Pharnabazes, who became its first king. It was ravaged by Gengis Khan and by Tamerlane. At a later period, the pernicious policy of dividing it into several principalities, each under an independent sovereign, was adopted, and thus it fell an easy prey, at various times, to the Turks and Persians. In 1424, it was separated into Kartalinia, Kachetia, and Imeretia: Mingrelia, Gouriel, and Imeretia at last submitted to the Sultans of Constantinople; while the Shahs of Persia became masters of Kachetia, Somhetia, and Gardaban, an arrangement concluded in 1576. At the instigation of the Turks, the Persians invaded and devastated Georgia on the side of Persia, when the Georgians besought the protection of Fedor Ivanovitch, Czar of Muscovy; and in 1586 they supplicated him to build a fortress for their defence on the Terek. A few years after, Boris Godonoff became the protector of George, Czar of

Kartalinia. In 1678, Georgia, by treaty, placed itself under the dependence of Russia.

While the Turks and the Persians ravaged Georgia, Peter the Great took possession of Derbent and Baku, which, with the provinces of Ghilan, Mazandaran, and Asterabad, were afterwards ceded to Russia by treaty. In 1729, Russia concluded a treaty with Persia. Seven years afterwards, the famous Nadir Shah, named Tamasp Kouli Khan, having mounted the throne of Persia, delivered Kartalinia and Kachetia from the Turkish yoke; and in 1732, Russia ceded to the Persian prince the possessions she held between the Terek and the Kour. In 1735, Turkey renounced all pretence to Georgia, and consented to the undisputed occupation of the country by Nadir Shah, to whose successes the Georgians afterwards largely contributed. Taimouras, who became viceroy of Georgia conjointly with his son Heraclius, defended the territory against all their enemies, and obtained victories over the various competitors for the throne of Persia; but, to strengthen their position, they entered into engagements with the Empress Elizabeth to maintain fidelity to Russia. A rupture then ensued between Taimouras and Heraclius in 1760. The latter seized Kartalinia and Kachetia, became very formidable, and in 1763 fought on the side of the Russians against the Turks. In 1774, peace was concluded between Russia and Turkey; and Kartalinia and Kachetia were declared independent. In 1783, these provinces were ceded to Russia. Another war broke out between Russia and the Porte; and at the peace of 1791, the Georgians were declared independent of Turkey. In 1795, Aga Mohammed Khan, who had ascended the throne of Persia, invaded Georgia, reached Tiflis, surprised Heraclius, who, though an octogenarian, fought with heroic valour, but was compelled to save himself and his family by flight. Tiflis was almost destroyed, and its principal inhabitants were led into captivity. In 1796, the Russian army, under Count Zouboff, entered Georgia, and gained several advantages, which were arrested by the death of

Catherine II.; and her successor, the Emperor Paul, recalled the troops.

Heraclius died in 1798, at the age of 84. By right of primogeniture, his eldest son George was his heir; but his claims were disputed, and civil war followed. The Russian troops entered the territory; and George, feeling the approach of death, submitted, with all his family, the *grandees*, and the people, to the Emperor Paul; and Russia took formal possession of the country in 1801, the original deed of gift being confirmed by a manifesto of the Emperor Alexander in the same year. The royal family of Georgia were domiciliated at St. Petersburg; and in describing the thanksgiving for the success of the Russian arms over Napoleon, in the cathedral church of the Virgin of Casan, an eye-witness describes their appearance at that ceremony and their position at the Russian court:—

“The mention of a certain royal family that swelled the train of the empress dowager, may perhaps have created the surprise of some of my readers; nor was it with a light degree of astonishment that we ourselves first beheld them in the court. Independent of the interest attached to the situation in which they were represented to be placed, it was impossible not to notice them from the singularity of air and mien. The princes were handsome men; but the princesses, though not young, displayed features of unparalleled beauty, with fair complexions and eyes of sparkling black. They were dressed with small round coifs upon their heads, from which a long white veil, open in front, descended to their feet, lending, by its novel fashion, a new grace to the elegance of their persons. The cause of the flight of the court of Tiflis to St. Petersburg may be detailed in a few words. The country of Georgia had been long exposed to the intrigues of its two powerful neighbours, and became, partly through their means, the constant prey of civil war. The ancient royal family was deposed early in the last century; and though, with a view to tranquillise all existing differences, a *red* and *white* rose union

was brought about by intermarriage with the usurper's family, yet this step afforded only a short repose; jealousies and factions gathering strength from intermission, soon broke out with more animosity than before. In the end, finding himself unable to withstand at once the attacks of his domestic as well as foreign enemies, the Czar George Heraclievitch voluntarily surrendered his kingdom to Paul the Emperor of Russia. In return for this, handsome apartments at the court of St. Petersburg were, by stipulation, to be appointed; and in the year 1801, he, with his whole family, arrived at Moscow. But it was reserved for the Emperor Alexander to fulfil this contract, which was done as soon as the confused state of things at the death of the late emperor would allow; and Georgia is in consequence now placed under the administration of a Russian governor.*

The means by which Georgia was acquired show the uniformity of tactics by which Russia has advanced her territorial dominions. It has always intervened in the internal feuds of neighbouring nations, under the pretence of a pacificator, with the real intent to disorganise and prevent the reconciliation of difficulties. It has fomented existing grievances and hatreds by secret and covert agency, so as to raise an excuse for military occupation; after garrisoning a country with troops, it assumed the title of a protectorate, invariably followed by incorporation. So she has acted with Poland, the two Kabardahs, the Crimea, Georgia, Imeretia, and Mingrelia; and only failed in the Caucasus by the valour of the inhabitants. The war with Turkey weakened the Porte by the severance of Greece, erected into an independent state, from the sceptre of the sultan. Count Capo d'Istria, a Corsican by birth, and who had been a Russian minister, was named president.

“ This war, the most disastrous in its consequences in which

* Journal of a Tour in Germany, Sweden, Russia, and Poland, during the years 1813 and 1814. By J. T. James. Second edition. Vol. ii. pp. 3, 4. London: John Murray. 1817.

Turkey had yet been engaged, was terminated by the treaty of Adrianople. The Emperor Nicholas, in deference to the jealousy of Europe, had publicly disclaimed all intention to aggrandise his dominions; and yet by this treaty he acquired Anapa and Poti, with a considerable extent of coast on the Black Sea; a portion of the pashalik of Akhilska, with the two fortresses of Akhilska and Akhilkillak, and the virtual possession of the islands formed by the mouths of the Danube; stipulated for the destruction of the Turkish fortress of Georgiova, and the abandonment by Turkey of the right bank of the St. George's branch of the Danube to the distance of several miles from the river; attempted a virtual separation of Moldavia and Wallachia from Turkey by sanitary regulations intended to connect them with Russia; stipulated that the Porte should confirm the internal regulations for the government of these provinces which Russia had established while she occupied them; removed, partly by force and partly by the influence of the priesthood, many thousand families of Armenians from the Turkish provinces in Asia to his own territories, as he had already moved nearly an equal number from Persia, leaving whole districts depopulated, and sacrificing, by the fatigues and privations of the compulsory march, the aged and infirm, the weak and the helpless.

“He established for his own subjects in Turkey an exemption from all responsibility to the national authority, and burdened the Porte with an immense debt, under the name of indemnity for the expenses of the war and for commercial losses; and finally retained Moldavia, Wallachia, and Silistria in pledge for the payment of a sum which Turkey could not hope in many years to liquidate. Having by this treaty imposed upon Turkey the acceptance of the protocol of the 22d of March, which secured to her the suzeraineté of Greece and a yearly tribute from that country, Russia used all her influence to procure the independence of Greece; and the violation by herself and her allies of the agreement which she had made an integral part of the treaty of

Adrianople. Greece was finally separated from Turkey, and erected into an independent state, of which Count Capo d'Istria, who had been a Russian minister, was named president.

“In the course of her hostilities with Turkey in Asia, Russia had developed new and extensive projects of future conquest. The Turkish pashalic of Bagdad had for many years been in the hands of a body of Georgians, who, like the Mamelukes in Egypt, had usurped almost the whole power of the government, and left the Porte no alternative but to sanction and legitimise the authority which some one of the number from time to time had usurped. The pasha of Bagdad, when the Russians invaded Turkish Armenia, was a Georgian of the name of Daud, or David; a man of much energy and ambition, who aimed at establishing his own independence. A brother of the pasha, who had continued to reside in his native country, and was now therefore a Russian subject, carried on a petty trade between Tiflis and Bagdad, and became the medium of communication between his masters and his brother. Almost all the offices of trust in the pashalic were held by Georgians; and they all had connexions in their native country,—many of their nearest relatives were in the Russian service. The influence of the government of Georgia in Bagdad began to be felt; and when General Paskievitch found himself at Erzeroom, on the banks of a branch of the Euphrates, and not far from the stream of the Tigris, he conceived the project of descending these rivers, and occupying the modern capital of Assyria and Mesopotamia. But the successes of General Diebitch on the Balkan had placed Russia in so advantageous a position, with means so inadequate to maintain it, that it was considered imprudent to hazard a failure on the side of Asia, and the emperor therefore abandoned the enterprise for a time.

“No opportunity was lost to form connections with the chiefs of Koordistan; but these wild mountaineers, though they sometimes yielded to the influence which then was dominant, exhibited on some occasions a fidelity to their sovereign, and a manly spirit and

intelligence, which did them infinite honour. Tymour, pasha of Van, on the approach of the Russians, sent a message to the prince royal of Persia, offering to deliver up his pashalic into his royal highness's hands, if he would engage to protect it from the Russians, and surrender it to the Porte at the termination of the war.

“Thus Russia, by a long series of hostilities and intrigues, had not only conquered a large extent of the European and Asiatic territories of Turkey, but brought about the actual separation of Greece, and attempted the virtual separation of Servia, Moldavia, and Wallachia from the Ottoman empire; had contemplated the occupation of Bagdad, and extended her secret connections to that pashalic and to the mountains of Koordistan.”*

NOTE.

THE TREATY OF ADRIANOPLE.

The following is a copy of the despatch transmitted by the Earl of Aberdeen to Lord Heytesbury, containing his comments on the treaty of Adrianople. It was only made public on the 28th June, 1854, after the manuscript of this work was in the hands of the printer. It is sufficiently important to be appended to this chapter as a note; and is a memorable instance of the evils of secret diplomacy, having only been published for the personal vindication of the Earl of Aberdeen. The correspondence of Sir Hamilton Seymour was also suppressed, and only given to the world to exonerate the present coalition ministry from blame. It would assuredly conduce to the welfare of nations, by increasing the responsibility of statesmen, if all international correspondence were printed in an annual volume; and certainly history would be more copious and authentic.

“Foreign Office, October 31, 1829.

“My Lord,—I have received from his Imperial Majesty's ambassador at this Court a copy of the definitive treaty of peace between Russia and the Porte, together with the manifesto of the Russian Cabinet, and a circular despatch from Count Nesselrode, dated the 4th of October.

“These papers have engaged the serious attention of His Majesty's Government. The consequences of the transaction to which they refer are so various and important, and influence so powerfully the future happiness and tranquillity of all nations, that it would be inconsistent with the station which His Majesty fills among the Sovereigns of Europe, as well as with

* Progress of Russia in the East, pp. 87-90.

that frankness and sincerity which he is desirous should characterise all his relations with the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, if he were not at once to communicate to His Imperial Majesty the sentiments which have been produced in his mind by an examination of the treaty of Adrianople.

“The first desire of His Majesty is to express the satisfaction which he has experienced from the restoration of peace. He sincerely rejoices that a state of warfare should at length have ceased, the existence of which he has constantly deplored, and the prolonged duration of which had only increased His Majesty’s apprehensions of the evils to which it must finally have led.

“Count Nesselrode, at the conclusion of his circular despatch, expresses an opinion that the treaty now concluded holds out to Europe a long prospect of tranquillity and repose. That this judgment may be fully confirmed, is our most anxious desire. In the meantime, it will be an object worthy of the solicitude of His Imperial Majesty to strengthen the confidence of his allies, and to remove those causes of alarm to which, if not discovered in the treaty of peace itself, the present state of the Turkish empire cannot fail to give rise.

“When His Imperial Majesty announced his intention of declaring war against the Ottoman Porte, upon grounds affecting exclusively the interests of Russia, His Majesty’s Government, without pronouncing any opinion respecting the justice of the war, expressed their conviction that the most complete success in the justest cause would not entitle the stronger party to demand from the weaker sacrifices which would affect its political existence, or would infringe upon that state of territorial possession upon which the general peace had rested. They also observed, that demands of indemnity and compensation might be carried to such an extent as to render compliance scarcely practicable, without reducing the Ottoman power to a degree of weakness which would deprive it of the character of an independent state.

“His Imperial Majesty, in carrying into execution his threatened invasion of the Ottoman dominions, declared his adherence to that disinterested principle which had characterised the protocol of St. Petersburg and the treaty of London. He renounced all projects of conquest and ambition. His Imperial Majesty frequently repeated that, so far from desiring the destruction of the Turkish empire, he was most anxious for its preservation. He promised that no amount of indemnity should be exacted which could affect its political existence ; and he declared that this policy was not the result of romantic notions of generosity, or of the vain desire of glory, but that it originated in the true interests of the Russian empire, in which interests well understood, and in his own solemn promises, would be found the best pledges of his moderation.

“His Imperial Majesty added, that his thoughts would undergo no change, even if, contrary to his intentions and his endeavours, Divine Pro-

vidence had decreed that we should now behold the termination of the Ottoman power. His Imperial Majesty was still determined not to extend the limits of his own dominions ; and he only demanded from his allies the same absence of all selfish and ambitious views, of which he would himself give the first example.

“ Does the treaty of Adrianople place the Porte in a situation corresponding with the expectations raised by these assurances ? The answer must be left to the judgment of Europe ; it might be left to the dispassionate judgment of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg.

“ Undoubtedly, if we look only at the relative position of the two belligerents, the fortune of the war might have enabled the emperor to exact still harder terms. The sultan, threatened by a formidable insurrection in Constantinople, having lost his army, and having ordered the remaining Asiatic troops to retire to their homes, was unable to offer any effectual opposition, and threw himself under the mercy of the Russian commander. By the persuasion of the British and French ambassadors, and of the Minister Extraordinary of the King of Prussia, the defeated monarch was induced to place entire confidence in the moderation of His Imperial Majesty.

“ It may not be easy to accuse of want of generosity the conqueror who checks the unresisted progress of success, and who spares the defenceless capital of his enemy. Nevertheless, the treaty in question, certainly not in conformity with the expectations held out by preceding declarations and assurances, appears vitally to affect the interests, the strength, the dignity, the present safety and future independence of the Ottoman empire.

“ The modes of domination may be various, although all equally irresistible. The independence of a state may be overthrown, and its subjection effectually secured, without the presence of a hostile force, or the permanent occupation of its soil. Under the present treaty the territorial acquisitions of Russia are small, it must be admitted, in extent, although most important in their character. They are commanding positions, far more valuable than the possession of barren provinces and depopulated towns, and better calculated to rivet the fetters by which the sultan is bound.

“ The cession of the Asiatic fortresses, with their neighbouring districts, not only secures to Russia the uninterrupted occupation of the eastern coast of the Black Sea, but places her in a situation so commanding as to control at pleasure the destiny of Asia Minor.

“ Prominently advanced into the centre of Armenia, in the midst of a Christian population, Russia holds the keys both of the Persian and Turkish provinces ; and whether she may be disposed to extend her conquests to the east or to the west, to Teheran or to Constantinople, no serious obstacle can arrest her progress.

“ In Europe the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia are rendered virtually independent of the Porte. A tribute is, indeed, to be paid to the

sultan, which he has no means of enforcing, except by the permission and even the assistance of Russia herself; and a prince, elected for life, is to demand investiture, which cannot be withheld. The Mussulman inhabitants are to be forcibly expelled from the territory. The ancient right of pre-emption is abolished; and the supplies indispensable for Constantinople, for the Turkish arsenals and for the fortresses, are entirely cut off. The most important fortresses upon the Danube are to be razed, and the frontier left exposed and unprotected against incursions which at any future time may be attempted.

“It is sufficient to observe of the stipulations respecting the islands of the Danube, that their effect must be to place the control of the navigation and commerce of that river exclusively in the hands of Russia.

“Servia, by the incorporation of the six districts referred to in the treaty, is erected into an independent and powerful state; and when the Allied Powers shall have finally decided upon the character of the government, and the limits to be assigned to Greece, the circle will be completed of territories nominally dependent or tributary, but which must be animated with the most hostile spirit; and the recognition of which by the powers of Europe is scarcely compatible with the security, perhaps not with the existence, of the Turkish empire.

“The commercial privileges and personal immunities which are secured by the treaty to the subjects of Russia, appear to be at variance with any notion we are able to form of the authority of a sovereign and independent prince. It is true, that by capitulations with the Porte, in consequence of the defective administration of justice by the Turkish government, rights have been obtained by European nations of such a description as would not have been conceded by the states of Christendom. These rights have not only been still further extended by the present treaty, but the stipulations, so far from being drawn up in the spirit of peace, are to all appearance rather calculated to invite and justify the renewal of hostilities. What reasonable prospect of ‘eternal peace, friendship, and good understanding’ can be afforded by an instrument which contains a special provision, making the calamities of war almost dependent upon the capricious extortion of a Turkish officer, or the unauthorised arrogance of a Russian trader?

“His Majesty’s government are persuaded that it will be impossible for His Imperial Majesty to reflect upon the terms of Article 7 of the treaty of Adrianople, without perceiving at once that they must be utterly subversive of the independence of the Ottoman power.

“This article stipulates that merchant vessels of all nations, without any restriction of size or tonnage, shall be admitted to pass freely through the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. The right of visit on the part of the Turkish government is expressly excluded. This provision not only deprives the Porte of the exercise of a right in its own waters, inherent in the very nature of independent sovereignty; but it also destroys a neces-

sary protection against the effects of foreign hostility or domestic treachery. The power of marching a Russian army, at any moment, through any part of the Turkish territory, without the permission of the government, could not be more degrading or more dangerous.

“Such stipulations are not only destructive of the territorial rights of sovereignty, and threatening to the safety of the Porte, but their obvious tendency is to affect the condition and the interests of all maritime states in the Mediterranean, and may demand from those states the most serious consideration.

“How is the true character of the vessel to be ascertained? In former treaties, the bulk and the amount of tonnage to be admitted had been fixed by Russia herself, and was regulated by what had been found to be most usual and most advantageous in the navigation of those seas. The right of search, for the purpose of ascertaining the nature and value of the cargo, with a view to fix the duties to be levied on importation, was very generally relinquished by the Porte in its practice towards the vessels of foreign powers; the ship’s manifest transmitted from the consul’s office being admitted as sufficient evidence of the nature of the cargo, instead of proof derived from actual inspection. But the right of visit, in order to ascertain the character of the vessel and the object of the voyage, has never been relinquished, and can never be relinquished by a state in any degree careful of its own independence and of its safety.

“The Porte is not only prohibited from exercising any interference with the free passage of the Straits by Russian ships, but it is also divested of this indispensable attribute of sovereignty in its relations with all other powers, and that, too, by virtue of a treaty concluded with the Emperor of Russia.

“If the Turkish government should detain and visit a ship belonging to any foreign state, the injury would not be offered to that state, with which, perhaps, no treaty may exist, but to the Emperor of Russia, who, according to the terms of the article in question, would at once be furnished with a justifiable cause of war against the Porte. But suppose any such state were fraudulently to send an armed vessel, or a vessel carrying armed men, into the waters of the Turkish dominion, and under the walls of the Seraglio, with purposes the most hostile, would His Imperial Majesty, by the treaty of Adrianople, become responsible for such an act? In either case the sultan would be entirely dependent upon Russia in a matter in which the dignity and security of his government were vitally affected.

“Is it too much to say, that such stipulations are inconsistent with the desire of His Imperial Majesty to preserve the independence of the Turkish empire?

“His Majesty’s government have always been persuaded that the power of imposing a pecuniary burden upon the Ottoman Porte, as a compensation and an indemnity for the expenses of the war, would be exercised in the

promised spirit of equity and of moderation. His Imperial Majesty cannot fail to reflect that, in judging of the character of such a transaction, it is necessary to compare the sum exacted, not only with the expenses of the war, but with the means of the power upon which the payment is imposed. The cabinet of St. Petersburg will undoubtedly acquiesce in the principle, that indemnities, whether pecuniary or territorial, ought not by their operation to crush the power by whom they are given, or to expose by their consequences the military security of neighbouring and allied states. The emperor is too wise not to desire, even in the midst of conquest and success, to maintain inviolate that system established for the general tranquillity of Europe, in which His Imperial Majesty's august predecessor took so prominent and so honourable a part. It is, therefore, with sincere satisfaction that His Majesty's government have learnt from the declaration made by Count Nesselrode to your Excellency, for the purpose of being transmitted to your government, 'that it was in contemplation not only to diminish the amount of the sum stipulated, but also to make a different arrangement with respect to its guarantee.' It is by such conduct that His Imperial Majesty will really manifest his generosity, and his regard for those principles of just and enlarged policy, by which alone can be secured the confidence of his allies and the respect of Europe.

"Even if the emperor were not thus to yield at once to the impulse of his own disposition, the same determination would still be recommended by considerations of prudence, as being essential to the success of objects which he has professed to have much at heart. His Imperial Majesty has declared that a regard for the true interests of Russia induced him to feel more desirous than any other European power of maintaining the independent existence and integrity of the Ottoman empire. He has also repeatedly avowed that the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte demanded his constant solicitude, and that the obligations both of his own conscience and of public treaties imposed upon him the special duty of consulting their welfare and providing for their protection. These objects, at all times difficult to reconcile, would, under the strict execution of the treaty, become altogether incompatible with each other. The real situation of the Turkish power is too obvious to escape the most common observation. The sultan is surrounded by independent states formed out of his own territories, and with the great mass of the European population of his empire anxiously waiting for the moment when they may profit by this example, and shake off his dominion altogether. Defeated and reduced to the lowest degree of humiliation, he has retained his throne and political existence by the mercy of his conqueror. The disaffection of his Mahomedan subjects of all ranks, whether produced by repeated disgrace or the effect of a gradual change long since in operation, has become general. In this condition, with a broken authority and exhausted resources, he is called upon to provide for the indemnity which is exacted from him. In what manner is the sultan

to relieve himself from this burden, and by whom must the sacrifices principally be made? If the Turkish government be still permitted to act at all as an independent power, it is clear that the necessary sums must be raised by fresh impositions upon the people, and by such means as are authorised by the law and customs of the empire. It is equally certain that the Christian subjects of the Porte must largely contribute to furnish these supplies. Compliance with the demands of the government will be difficult, but the urgency of the case will justify severity. Resistance may be attempted: if successful, leading to general confusion and revolt; if otherwise, spoliation and oppression will follow. At all events, new scenes of calamity will be opened, calculated to frustrate the admitted objects of His Imperial Majesty, and fatally destructive both to the independence of the Porte and to the happiness and prosperity of the Christian subjects of the empire.

“There are other considerations which ought to have their due weight in the mind of His Imperial Majesty.

“It cannot be doubted that the result of the war has been such as to change entirely the relative position of the belligerents towards each other, as well as towards the neighbouring states and the rest of Europe. This change, it may be admitted, is to a certain extent the natural consequence of an unequal contest; for at the termination of hostilities, characterised on one side by the most signal success, and on the other by continued disaster, it would be unreasonable to suppose that the parties could in every respect resume their former relations. It is, therefore, not exclusively to the conditions of the peace, but also to the events of the war, that we are to ascribe the change which has taken place. In whatever manner it may have been accomplished, the fact is sufficient to justify some anxiety on the part of these powers, who have always felt a deep interest in the preservation of the system of the European balance established by the treaty of Paris and at the Congress of Vienna. This anxiety must be greatly increased when, in addition to the unavoidable weakness and prostration of the Turkish power, it is found that fresh causes are brought into action which are obviously calculated to hasten and insure its utter dissolution. The evils attending upon uncertainty, expectation, and alarm, must be universally felt throughout Europe. Encouragement will be afforded to projects the most adverse to the general tranquillity; and the different powers, so far from disarming, will probably augment their warlike preparations, already too extensive for a state of peace.

“It is only by a frank and cordial desire on the part of His Imperial Majesty to remove all reasonable grounds of suspicion and apprehension—it is only by a sincere endeavour in conjunction with his allies to confirm and perpetuate the repose which has hitherto been enjoyed, and by making this the main object of European policy, that we shall be enabled to avert the threatened dangers. In this salutary work His Imperial Majesty will

assuredly call to mind the example of his illustrious predecessor ; and he will recollect that, whatever may have been the glories of his reign, the last ten years of his life, devoted exclusively to the preservation of peace, eminently entitled him to the gratitude of Europe.

“ I am to instruct your Excellency to read this despatch to Count Nesselrode, and, if desired, to give his Excellency a copy. The sentiments of His Majesty are expressed without reserve, but with cordial and friendly feelings. They are expressed, too, without previous concert or communication with any other power whatsoever.

“ I am, &c.

“ ABERDEEN.”

THE REVOLUTION IN POLAND.

While Russia was availing herself of a favourable opportunity to dismember and humiliate Turkey, the other governments of Europe, too pusillanimous or too disunited, looked on, alarmed and anxious spectators of a controversy in which they ought to have intervened by fleets and armies. France, under the elder branch of the house of Bourbon, had been secretly negotiating with the Emperor Nicholas, quite prepared to connive at the occupation of Constantinople, provided the Muscovite arms would enable her to extend her frontier to the Rhine.

The revolution of July 1830 disconcerted that intrigue, and Charles X. and his family were again driven into exile. The court of St. Petersburg was paralysed on receiving this unwelcome and unexpected intelligence, and was compelled to suspend its designs on the principality of Khiva, at the eastern coast of the Caspian, which it had determined to seize and annex. The revolution of Paris produced the revolution of Poland, which broke out at Warsaw on the 29th November, 1830.

Towards the close of the reign of Alexander, Poland had been deprived of all her constitutional privileges ; and the hope entertained by her more enthusiastic patriots of restoring the ancient kingdom of the Jagellons appeared desperate under the iron rule of Russia. The Poles were no strangers to the secret conspiracies

of the Russian officers which terminated so fatally in 1825, and many of their leading men were suspected of complicity. Prince Zaionczek, lieutenant of the kingdom, died within eight months after the decease of Alexander; and the Grand Duke Constantine succeeded him as viceroy, armed with powers only short of regal and imperial. He instituted an extraordinary court of inquiry to detect the disaffected, and nearly 200 persons were arrested, but only against eight colourable charges could be raised; and these were so slight, amounting to no more than indiscretion, that they were afterwards pardoned. The prudence of the conspirators had left no traces of their designs; but resistance to the government had reached numerous classes, and even penetrated into the army. General Cholpicki was sounded, the insurgents desiring that he should take the command; but he quitted Warsaw, and retired into the country, either from a conviction that the enterprise was hopeless, or that the movement was premature.

On the 15th December, 1828, a secret association was founded for securing national independence; and within a month it secured the adhesion of many of the garrison of Warsaw. Among its members were several of the deputies of the legislature. At this juncture the Czar arrived at Warsaw, in 1829, to be crowned king of Poland. A rising was resolved upon, unless the emperor acceded to a petition which it was agreed should be presented to him, revoking the additional article of the charter which annulled the publication of the debates in the Diet. It was expected he would refuse, and the insurrection would then assume the character of a legal protest against the infraction of the original constitution. The Grand Duke Constantine announced that the Czar would not receive a deputation having such an object in view. Then it was determined to assassinate Nicholas, the viceroy, and all the members of his family; but the resolution of the conspirators soon quailed, and the plan was abandoned on the evening before it was to have been executed. The coronation passed over quietly, in the midst of festivities in which loyalty was simulated.

After a suspension of five years, which was a violation of the charter, the Diet was convened on the 28th May, 1830. The first business related to a law on marriage and divorce, accepted by the senate, rejected by the deputies. A few days before the end of the session, the deputy Malachowski preferred an accusation against the ministers of finance, justice, public instruction, and the police. On the first division, the votes were equal. The government, fearing to be left in a minority, as matters became more matured, heaped delay upon delay, and the procrastination lasted till the legislature was prorogued. This parliamentary contest passed under the eyes of the emperor, who prolonged his visit at Warsaw till the close of the session, and the insurrectionary feeling did not escape his notice. He gave orders for increased vigilance, and had scarcely returned to St. Petersburg when the French revolution exploded. At length the 29th November, 1830, arrived, and on that day Warsaw followed the example of Paris. At six o'clock two fires, simultaneously kindled, were the signal for revolt.

The first movement was directed against the Grand Duke Constantine. His seizure was confided to eighteen students. His guards were surprised, killed, or made prisoners. The conspirators penetrated into his palace, uttering fierce shouts of vengeance. The Grand Duke, half dressed, was lying on a camp-bed. Roused by his valet, he threw a cloak over his shoulders, and opening the door of a secret staircase, which led to the gardens of his palace, he rushed down the stairs, and escaped from the fury of his assailants; but General Gendre, and Lubowicki, vice-president of the police, were pierced mortally with bayonets.

Disappointed of their most illustrious victim, the eighteen conspirators, after a useless search, joined their comrades, who were attacking the barracks. The Russian cavalry remained faithful, as also the Polish horse-guards. The encounter was brief and sanguinary; but the students of the artillery school arriving on the spot with cannon, decided the victory in favour of the insurgents. Then

the arsenal was carried, and the triumph of the revolution was complete. A provisional government was formed, consisting of the princes Adam Czartoryski and Michael Radziwill, General Pac, Kochanowski, and Niemcewicz. The command of the army was now accepted by Chlopicki.

Constantine had retired to Mokotow, and some Polish regiments joined him. His generals urged him to return to Warsaw, thinking that the revolt might easily be suppressed; but the Grand Duke refused, offering to receive a deputation to state grievances, real or imaginary. A deputation was accordingly nominated, and sent to the quarters of the expelled viceroy. They stated that he would be perfectly free to regain the frontier, provided Russia bound itself to fulfil the promises of the Emperor Alexander as to the restitution of the provinces incorporated with the empire, and execute faithfully and rigorously all the articles of the constitution which he had granted. The conference lasted several hours. The Grand Duke, whose position was delicate and embarrassing, would not enter into any engagement on the terms proposed, but consented that the Polish troops under his command should return to Warsaw. The results of this interview were reduced into writing, and are contained in the following letter, dated the 3d December, which the Grand Duke addressed to the administrative council:

“ I permit the Polish soldiers, who have remained faithful to me to the last moment, to rejoin their comrades. I leave Warsaw with the imperial troops, and I expect from Polish honour that they will not be interrupted in their march to re-enter the empire. I also recommend to the protection of the Polish nation all Russians, their establishments, and their property, which I leave under the safeguard of the most sacred honour.”

So terminated the first act of this grand tragedy.

On the 5th December, the Polish commander-in-chief, Chlopicki, published the following proclamation:

“ Our critical position demanding the highest energy, and any

interruption to the march of public affairs being necessarily fatal to the national cause, not actuated by ambition or the love of power, but from a regard to circumstances, and following the example of the Romans, who, when danger hovered over the country, confided supreme power to a single individual, I this day declare to you, Poles, that only for a few days—that is, till the assembling of parliament—I assume the functions of a dictator. I shall then restore my power to the representatives of the nation. Believe me, my countrymen, I will only use that power for your sole benefit. Long live the nation !”

When intelligence of these bold measures reached St. Petersburg, Nicholas published the following manifesto, dated the 24th December, 1830 :—“ The Poles,” it said, “ who, after so many misfortunes, enjoyed peace and prosperity under the shadow of our power, but precipitated themselves anew into the abyss of revolution and calamity, are an assemblage of credulous beings, who, though already seized with terror at the thought of the chastisement which awaits them, dare to dream for a few moments of victory, and to propose conditions to us, their lawful sovereign.”

The position of Poland was cruelly unfortunate. Pillaged and partitioned by three despots, she had not only to resist the gigantic armies of Russia, but to dread the attacks of Austria and Prussia ; for to re-establish the ancient kingdom of the Jagellons was to demand the restitution of Posen and Gallicia. The Russian ministers accredited to the courts of Berlin and Vienna had instructions to demand “ what course those governments would pursue, and specially what concurring aid of repression they would exercise against the Poles, and within what limits the two powers would render their support to Russia.” They answered by each establishing an army of 60,000 men on their respective frontiers—Prussia in the duchy of Posen, Austria in Gallicia—and in avowing the following policy :—“ No correspondence will be allowed to pass through Prussia or Austria ; no aid to the insurgents will be forwarded or tolerated ; such ports as Dantzic

and Königsberg will be closed against the freights of munitions of war, even should they come from France or England; the revenues of the kingdom of Poland deposited at the Bank of Berlin will be sequestered, and placed at the disposal of the Emperor Nicholas: but if the spirit of revolt should extend from Warsaw to Cracow, and thence into the duchy of Posen or Gallicia, then the Prussian and Austrian troops will immediately act in concert with Russia, to ensure the maintenance of the treaties of 1814 and 1815, without fearing the notes or the menaces of France."

It was under these perilous circumstances that the Polish Diet assembled under the auspices of Wladislas Ostrowski, whose first act was a formal adhesion to the insurrection against the rule of the Czar. This bold measure induced Cholpicki to resign the dictatorship, because he thought it imprudent to assume a tone of defiance till negotiation had failed. The resignation, however, was not accepted, and the Diet legally invested him with the authority that he desired to abdicate. On the 5th January, 1831, it published a manifesto, heroic and dignified; but it proved a funereal oration over the nationality of the kingdom. "If Providence," said that document, "has destined this land to perpetual subjection; and if, in this last struggle, the liberty of Poland is to fall under the ruins of its towns and the corpses of its defenders, our enemy will only reign over deserts; and every good Pole, in dying, will have this consolation, that if Heaven has not permitted him to save his native country, he has at least, by this war to the knife, covered for a moment the menaced liberties of Europe."

On the 10th of January they published a manifesto, stating their grievances. It contained the following paragraphs:—"The union of the crown of an autocrat and of a constitutional king is one of those political anomalies which cannot long exist. Every body foresaw that the kingdom would become the germ of liberal institutions for Russia, or succumb under the iron hand of its despotism. The question was soon decided. Public instruction was corrupted. A system of obscuratism was organised. The people

were shut out from all means of obtaining instruction. An entire palatinate was deprived of its representatives in the council. The Chamber lost the faculty of voting the budget. Monopolies were created, calculated to dry up the resources of national wealth. The treasury, augmented by these measures, became the prey of paid hirelings, infamous incendiary agents, and despicable spies. Calumny and espionage had penetrated even into the privacy of families, had infested with their poison the liberty of domestic life, and the ancient hospitality of the Poles had become a snare for innocence. Personal freedom, which had been solemnly guaranteed, was violated; the prisons were crowded; courts-martial were appointed to decide in civil causes, and imposed infamous punishments on citizens whose only crime was that of having attempted to save from corruption the spirit and character of the nation."

Prince Lubecki was sent to St. Petersburg as an envoy from the Diet; but the emperor refused to receive him in any other capacity than as the plenipotentiary of the rebels. The Czar communicated to the officers of his guards the events that had occurred in Poland, and concluded that manifesto in the following terms:—"I trust that if circumstances should compel me to place myself at the head of my guards, you will again manifest the attachment of which you have given me proofs: but I pray you, gentlemen, not to entertain a general hatred against the Poles; they are our brothers; for the revolt has only been fomented by badly-intentioned men. I hope, with the aid of God, that every thing will be terminated happily."

The Russian army destined for the re-conquest of Poland was placed under the command of Marshal Diebitch Zabalkanski, the crosser of the Balkan. The generalissimo of the Poles was Prince Michael Radziwill, who had no military experience; but at the earnest entreaties of Prince Adam Czartoryski, Clopicki accepted a secondary command, to aid Radziwill by his advice.

On the 30th January, 1831, the Diet elected a permanent government, composed of five members. Prince Adam Czartoryski

was placed at its head, with the title of president. Unhappily their political opinions were divergent or antagonistic. The princes Czartoryski and Bazykowski were avowed partisans of monarchy ; Lelewel was a democrat ; Vincent Niemoïowski and Theophilus Morawski were constitutionalists. They were not well chosen to act together ; and the crisis was imminent, for the Russians were advancing rapidly to Warsaw ; and as the concessions at first made by the Emperor Alexander to Poland had wounded Muscovite pride, there was an old grievance, as well as recent defiance, to avenge. The Emperor Nicholas had terminated a manifesto addressed to his subjects in these words :—“ The insurrection pursues its course ; the insurgents take up arms against Russia, and provoke our faithful provinces to separate themselves from our empire. On the 13th of January an illegal assembly had the audacity to declare that we and our imperial family had ceased to reign in Poland ; and that the throne, erected by our august brother, awaited a new sovereign. This forgetfulness of all duties and of all oaths has filled the measure of their crimes. The moment has come to employ force, and to invoke the aid of the Sovereign Judge of all nations, and to march against the rebels. Russians, in these sad circumstances, we take up arms with the afflictions of a father, but with the resolution of a prince who knows his duties, for the safety and the integrity of our empire. Let us offer our fervent prayers to the Omnipotent ; may He bless our efforts ; may He, by granting us a prompt victory, avert the obstacles which oppose the happiness of peoples, whose destiny is committed to our keeping. As soon as the empire, troubled by a few rebels, is restored to itself, may the Omnipotent aid us to found its future on solid bases, which respond to the wants of the kingdom, and for ever reduce to nothingness the dreams of those who speak about separation. Faithful subjects, such is the end of your exertions ; your country can count upon you.”

It falls not within the scope of this work to describe in detail the various battles fought in this heroic struggle of independence,

in which numbers ultimately conquered valour. The fall of Poland is "a history of itself," and we can do no more than trace the progress of the contest. Hostilities commenced on the 14th February, 1831. A Russian division attacked the suburb of Praga, and was repulsed with the loss of eleven cannon. Diebitch occupied the wood of Grochow with 80,000 men, supported by 200 pieces of artillery; he was opposed by the Poles with 45,000 men and fifty pieces of cannon. Here ensued the battle of Wawer, which lasted during the whole of the 19th and 20th of February, 1831. It terminated by an armistice of four days to bury the dead, for the slaughter had been terrific.

On the morning of the 25th the Russian army, reinforced by 20,000 men, fell furiously on the whole Polish line. The resistance of the Poles was desperate. The object of Diebitch was to gain a wood. This post was defended by General Zymirski, who died on the field of honour. The wood was now occupied; there the Russian artillery was planted, and opened a fire on the second Polish line, commanded by Skrzynecki. Here Chlopicki was severely wounded, and removed. The streets of Praga were blocked by fugitives and carts containing the wounded. The Russian hussars and cuirassiers pressed on to the barrier of Grochow. Diebitch was confident of victory; but the Polish infantry rallied. Congreve rockets broke the Russian horse. The Polish lancers charged them, and they were annihilated. Night had set in. Diebitch, who had lost 10,000 men, retired behind the wood so dearly purchased. Skrzynecki urged Prince Radziwill to pursue the Russians; he refused. Such was the battle of Grochow. The Russian field-marshal entrenched himself near Wawer, and took up his winter-quarters in the palatinate of Lublin.

On the 26th February, 1831, Prince Radziwill resigned the command, which he had reluctantly accepted. Skrzynecki was appointed his successor. On the 30th or 31st of March he quitted Praga, and won the battles of Dembé, Igania, and Ostrolenka. He has been blamed for the slowness of his movements; and with

more promptitude, military judges have affirmed that he might have crushed the army of Diebitch. But his losses were heavy in these sanguinary encounters ; and, more fatal still, the Russians had brought the cholera into Poland ; and that Asiatic pestilence spread among the Poles immediately after the battle of Igania.

On the 9th April, General Dwernicki moved along the frontiers of Galicia, and crossed the Bug. The Russian generals Roth and Kaysaroff advanced against him, and succeeded in uniting their forces. A dense fog favoured their movements, and on the 26th of April the Polish general was surrounded by 25,000 of the enemy. To these he could only oppose 3000. Resistance was vain : he crossed the boundary into Galicia, and was there disarmed by the Austrians. This proved fatal to the insurgents who had risen in Volhynia, Podolia, and the Ukraine, who, deprived of the expected aid of Dwernicki, grounded arms to the Austrians.

On the 10th June, Diebitch died of cholera ; and on the 29th the Grand Duke Constantine fell a victim to the same disease. Field-marshal Paskievitch Erivanski succeeded to the command, and reached the Russian camp on the 24th June. From this date fortune deserted Polish valour. The insurgent generals, Dembinski, Gielgud, and Chlapowski, at the head of 12,000 men, attempted to rouse Lithuania ; but they did not act in concert, nor were they supported, as they expected to have been, by Skrzynecki. They advanced against Wilna ; but the governor threatened to fire the city if the inhabitants made the slightest movement. Then the patriot army was profoundly discouraged. Defections arose in its ranks. Skalski, aide-de-camp to General Gielgud, shot him with a pistol. Chlapowski, alarmed at this sedition, sought refuge in the Prussian territory. After a painful retreat, Dembinski regained Praga with his shattered forces on the 3d August, 1831. Thus ended the Lithuanian expedition.

A Russian division under General Rudiger occupied the palatinate of Lublin. The Polish generalissimo resolved on its expul-

sion. He marched against it at the head of his forces, having ordered General Jankowski to attack it in flank ; but an express brought a false alarm that Warsaw was menaced, and the commander-in-chief immediately crossed the Vistula, without advising Jankowski of this movement. Jankowski obeyed his orders, and attacked the Russians alone. He was defeated, and his troops were indignant ; and when they reached Praga, declared that they had been the victims of treason.

On the 1st of July, the Diet moved an address to the executive government, calling upon it to declare the country in danger, and commanding every man capable of bearing a musket to defend it. The government promptly responded to that appeal, and put forward the following proclamation:—" In the name of God and liberty ; in the name of the kings and heroes, your ancestors, who have fallen on the field of battle for the independence of Europe ; in the name of future generations, who will demand of your shades an account of their servitude ; in the name of the peoples who are gazing on you, Poles, arise in mass !"

The fatal hour was approaching. The main Russian army, burning for revenge, was advancing. In Prussia the Emperor Nicholas could count on an ally ready to act either on the offensive or the defensive. Koenigsberg and Dantzic were not only open to the commissariat of Russia, but to its troops ; the whole Prussian territory served as a basis for all the operations of the imperial army ; indeed, Prussia went so far as to engage to build a bridge over the Vistula, in the eastern range of its territory, in case that constructed by Paskievitch was destroyed.

The plan of the Russian commander-in-chief was to pass the left bank of the Vistula. Modlin was the point of his operations ; and to succeed by a flank movement, it was necessary that his army should describe an immense curve. Military critics have pronounced this strategy as more daring than wise ; and on so extended a march the troops were of necessity separated, and might have been defeated in detail by a small but active enemy.

But Skrzynecki remained motionless, allowing his opponent to carry out his plan and concentrate his forces. The Russians crossed the Vistula in front of Osieck; and from that hour the fall of Warsaw was imminent. What excuse can be offered to justify the supineness of the Polish generalissimo? What apology can be framed to prevent his prudence being mistaken for treachery? It has been said that General Sebastiani, then minister to Louis Philippe, wrote to Skrzynecki to act on the defensive, and await the pacific result of diplomatic negotiations under the auspices of France; warning him that active hostilities would profoundly irritate the Czar. To this illusory idea, to this fantastic hope, Skrzynecki sacrificed the last remaining chance of the independence of his country: as a soldier he must be condemned, as a private gentleman he may be pitied.

Public clamour broke out with more than accustomed vehemence. A court of inquiry, composed of a deputy from each of the eight palatinates, and of officers on active service, was held on the 27th July. The generalissimo appeared before them, and insisted on his right of imposing silence on all the general officers, as they were placed under his orders. The past was, therefore, set aside, and the greatest energy recommended in the future. It was determined upon to march against the enemy and fight a decisive battle. Against this Skrzynecki protested, exclaiming, "Representatives, whether blessings or anathemas fall on your heads, whether you meet with triumph or defeat, I wash my hands of all personal responsibility."

The order of the court of inquiry must be obeyed; but Skrzynecki executed it in a feeble spirit. He marched out of Warsaw only to return; and persisting in this vacillation, he was deposed, and the command given to Dembinski, who, however, shared the political and military views of his predecessor, and in his first address to the troops declared that he would imitate his tactics. It was reported that the new generalissimo was about to dissolve the Diet, to close the clubs, and imprison the patriots. The Polish

army fell back upon the intrenchments of Warsaw. The populace, accusing the generals of treason, committed the most horrible atrocities. Jankowski, pierced with bayonets, was murdered. Boukowski, his son-in-law, was massacred as he fled to the ditches of the citadel. Hurtig, Salacki, the Russian chamberlain Fanshawe, the wife of General Bazanoff, underwent the same fate. Their dead bodies were suspended at the lamp-posts. Several spies of the old government were hanged.

This scene of horror was terminated by the courage of one man, Krukowiecki. He saw that power would fall to him who picked it up from the blood-stained ground. He seized it, and declared himself governor of Warsaw. By his energy the tumult was suppressed. Two days afterwards the Diet reconstructed the government, confiding the executive power to a president assisted by six ministers, who were invested with the right of nominating the commander-in-chief. The president was Krukowiecki, and he gave the command of the army to the old General Casimir Malachowski. The Russian standards were now visible from the walls of Warsaw.

General Rudiger crossed the Vistula at the head of 13,000 men, supported by forty pieces of cannon. He united these troops to the army of Paskievitch, who fixed on the 6th September, 1831, as the day for assaulting Warsaw. He had at his disposal 100,000 men and 300 guns. The fort of Wola was the first position against which the Russian artillery was directed. It was bravely defended by the Polish General Sowinski; but it was forced: that brave man, disdaining to surrender, led a band of heroes into a church, where, after a noble resistance, he fell covered with wounds. The second line of defence was commanded by Bem, who, with his forty guns, spread havoc among the ranks of the enemy, and compelled them to retire. Then Malachowski attempted to regain the fort of Wola, and a terrific struggle took place under its walls; but the energy of the Poles was checked by the impetuous charges of the Russian cavalry.

Krukowiecki deeming the fall of Warsaw certain, demanded an interview with Paskievitch, which was granted. The conference was protracted; an armistice of eight hours was granted, that the Diet might accept or refuse the conditions of surrender proposed by the Russian commander. 'On the 7th September the Diet held its last sitting. It was urged that the city could resist no longer after the loss of Wola. The armistice terminated, surrender being denounced. The cannon again sounded. "To the ramparts!" exclaimed the patriots; and for a moment they were successful; but what could valour effect against overpowering numbers? All the Polish redoubts fell in turn. The faubourgs were in flames when Krukowiecki capitulated. But several Polish battalions continued the sanguinary struggle, while others fell back on Praga, where Bem had concentrated his formidable artillery. Malachowski, however, refused to yield, although the dictator had surrendered, and he was compelled to abdicate his functions. But the cause was desperate, and on the night of the 7th and 8th Malachowski himself signed the capitulation, and gave up to Paskievitch the *tête-du-pont* of Praga, who, on his part, promised not to impede the retreat of the Polish army for forty-eight hours. It was reduced to 20,000 combatants, and fell back mournfully on Modlin, having the members of the Diet in its ranks. Ramorino, on hearing of the fall of Warsaw, retreated into Austrian Galicia; for the Russians threatened to surround his division. Malachowski resigned, and was replaced by Ribinski. This little army was soon enclosed by swarms of Cossacks; and Ribinski, driven to the last extremities, when a prolongation of resistance could only have led to massacre, only less criminal than deliberate murder, communicated to the Polish people the following ultimatum:—1. The army returns to its duties to its king. 2. It will send a deputation to implore forgiveness for the past. 3. In waiting the answer of his Imperial Majesty, it will take up cantonments in the palatinate of Plock. 4. Modlin will be immediately given up to the imperial troops.

The last effort of the Poles was to throw a bridge over the Vistula, and march towards the Prussian frontiers. On the 5th October, 1831, the remnants of the patriot army laid down their arms.

The failure of the Polish revolution of 1830 is an episode in history of an instructive character. That a people so animated with a love of nationality should endeavour to shake off the detested yoke of Russia, is natural, and worthy of every praise ; but it was rash in them to measure their strength against their gigantic antagonist, without having secured the alliance of France and England, as they were sure to encounter enemies in Prussia and Austria. The movement was one of impulse rather than of deliberation. The patriots had matured no plan, either offensive or defensive ; and so divided were their councils, that they had neither selected a chief, nor agreed upon the choice of members for a provisional government. They had, indeed, counted upon the sympathies of the people of France and England, and those they received ; but neither of the governments of those countries had given them even hopes, much less solid guarantees, of military support. Assistance from the ocean was impossible, as Poland had no sea-port. The patriots, therefore, rose in arms against the three despotic powers of the north, each of whom desired their destruction ; for each was a guilty participator in the spoil of their dismembered nationality. If the Poles embarked in this enterprise incautiously, they pursued it without judgment, appointing generals without experience, or who wanted firmness. In fact, neither in their civil nor military arrangements was there that unity of feeling and action, without which success is impossible. But Europe owes to Poland a deep debt of gratitude, which future generations are bound to repay. It is known that Charles X. had entered into a compact with the Emperor Nicholas to favour his occupation of Constantinople, receiving his support in the extension of the French territory to the Rhine. The expulsion of the elder branch of the Bourbons defeated that scheme ; but had not.

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Poland risen, the Russian army, fully prepared, would have marched into Western Europe to establish despotism in France, and restore the exiled family. That struggle the revolution of Warsaw averted.

Nicholas only recognised two forms of government, a republic or an autocracy ; but he considered the latter perfection. Limited monarchy, or any intermediate state between the two extremes, he held in contempt and detestation. He could not punish France for disturbing his political convictions ; but he determined to wreak his vengeance on subjugated Poland, and through her teach the world that he was prepared to take up the gauntlet whenever or wherever revolution threw it down into the arena. He ordered the citadel of Warsaw to be enlarged and strengthened, and the guns to be so pointed as to command the whole city. When the deputation arrived, he addressed them in the following terms, which were not intended alone for the ears of the municipality of Warsaw, but for those of all Europe : “ I am aware, gentlemen, that you wish to speak to me ; I know even the purport of your proposed discourse ; and it is to spare your utterance of a lie, that I desire it may not be uttered. Yes, gentlemen, a lie ; for I know that your sentiments are not those which you would persuade me to believe. And how could I give any credence to them, since you held the same language before the revolution ? The Emperor Alexander, who did for you more than any emperor of Russia ought to have done,—loaded you with his bounties, favoured you more than his own subjects, and rendered your nation one of the most happy and most flourishing,—was repaid with the blackest ingratitude. You have never been able to content yourselves with the most advantageous position ; and you have finished by destroying your own happiness with your own hands. I speak the truth to you, that you may the better understand our relative positions, and that you may know on what to count ; for I now see you and address myself to you for the first time since the troubles. If you persist in indulging in the dreams

of a distinct nationality, of an independent Poland, and similar chimeras, you will only bring down on your heads the most terrible calamities. I have built a citadel in Warsaw, and I will fire upon your city ; I will destroy Warsaw at the first symptom of an outbreak ; and certainly I will not rebuild it. It is a pain to me to speak thus ; it is truly painful for a sovereign thus to address his subjects ; I only do so for your own good. I know that a correspondence is kept up with foreigners ; that they send hither pernicious books, and attempt to pervert the minds of the people ; but the best police in the world, with a frontier such as you have, cannot hinder clandestine intercourse. It is your duty to act as police to avert evil. In the midst of the troubles which agitate Europe, and of doctrines which undermine the social edifice, Russia alone is strong and intact. Believe me, gentlemen, it is a real happiness to belong to this country, and enjoy its protection. If you conduct yourselves well, if you fulfil all your duties, my paternal solicitude will extend to all of you ; and, in spite of the past, my government will always think of your welfare. Remember what I have said to you ; engrave it on your memories."

It was not likely to be soon forgotten by those who heard it ; and history would be false to its duties, if it failed to record the insolence of the despot, who commenced by silencing the voice of the deputation, by charging them with being liars and hypocrites ; threatening to reduce their capital to ruins, ordering each citizen to act as a spy or policeman ; and terminating by the assurance that they had reached the summit of happiness, by being privileged to live under the sway of a paternal despot.

WAR BETWEEN EGYPT AND TURKEY.—TREATY OF UNKLAR SKELESSI.—TREATY OF LONDON.

The war terminated by the treaty of Adrianople had prostrated Turkey. As an indemnity for its cost, Russia had exacted from her 5,000,000*l.* sterling ; and the Sublime Porte had re-

nounced its sovereignty over Greece. Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, thought the opportunity had arrived when he could establish his independence, and he invaded Syria. The troops of Sultan Mahmoud sent to oppose him were defeated at Damascus, Aleppo, and Beylam by Ibrahim, eldest son of the revolted pasha; and the battle of Koniah threw open to him the road to Constantinople. The Turkish fleet had been treacherously surrendered to the Viceroy of Egypt. Russia was alarmed, and repeatedly and urgently offered her assistance to the sultan: for the Emperor Nicholas dreaded the success of Mehemet Ali, whose superior genius rendered him a far more formidable enemy than Mahmoud, dispirited by his past misfortunes. The sultan was not eager to accept his aid; but the economical system of England had so weakened her navy, that she had only a few frigates in the Mediterranean; and the fleet of France was scarcely more formidable. Mahmoud, therefore, had no alternative but to accept the proffered aid of his insidious foe, who secretly rejoiced at the successes of Egypt, so far as they enfeebled the strength of Turkey. The pasha, in fact, though unconsciously, was playing the game of the czar, who would only have intervened actively to prevent Constantinople falling into the hands of a rival, having inwardly reserved the spoil for himself. The Russian fleet entered the Bosphorus: but Russia itself was then menaced in the Caucasus and in her southern provinces; and she advised the Porte to negotiate with the pasha, and suspend hostilities; while she addressed the same policy to the pasha, accompanied by a menace if he continued to advance. Under these circumstances Nicholas extorted from the Porte the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, which was signed on the 26th June (8th July) at Constantinople. The substance of this treaty was, that there should be perpetual peace between Russia and Turkey, both by sea and land; that they should protect the territories of each other against all invaders; that whichever party demanded the aid of the other, it should pay the expenses; that this treaty should be fixed for eight years



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from the date of the imperial ratification being interchanged, although both parties hoped it might be perpetual. In expressing this hope, who was the hypocrite, who was the dupe? Or were the diplomatists on both sides equally tainted with duplicity? These questions must here remain unanswered; but the separate and secret article appended may furnish a reply.

“By virtue of one of the first clauses of the first article of the open treaty of defensive alliance concluded between the imperial court of Russia and the Sublime Porte, the two high contracting parties are bound to render to each other material aid and the most efficacious assistance, for the safety of their respective dominions. Nevertheless, as his majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, wishing to spare the Sublime Ottoman Porte the expense and embarrassment which might result to it by the offering of mutual succour, will not insist on that succour, should circumstances oblige the Sublime Porte to render it; the Sublime Ottoman Porte, instead of the aid it is bound to furnish in case of need, according to the reciprocity of the treaty, will limit its action in favour of the imperial court of Russia to closing the Straits of the Dardanelles; that is to say, by not permitting any foreign vessel of war, under any pretext whatever, to enter those straits. The present article, separate and secret, shall have the same force and value as though it had been inserted word for word in the treaty of alliance this day.” Russia had now gained her point, for Turkey had become her vassal. She had shut out aid from the fleets of Western Europe, and was at the mercy of the squadrons that might sail from Sebastopol. Russia could with impunity carry out her policy on the eastern shores of the Black Sea, and subjugate the Caucasus, unless the brave mountaineers could defend themselves without foreign aid. Turkey always had enjoyed the right of excluding foreign ships of war from the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus; and all the powers had sanctioned that right on the understanding that there were to be no exceptions; but this right was now transferred to

Russia, for Turkey could no longer admit them when Russia was at war with a naval power. The tactics of the czar are skilfully unravelled and strikingly exposed in the following animadversions on his policy :

“ Continual aggressions cannot be made without a sacrifice of character ; they attract attention, and afford other nations an opportunity to interfere. There is a point, however, in the progress of subjugation at which resistance ceases and protection begins ; a point beyond which force and violence are no longer necessary, and where the absence of collision presents no occasion for third parties to interpose. To a power which has to dread opposition in its career of conquest, the step which enables it to pass that point is the most important in the whole series ; and Russia, from frequent experience, well knew its value. There were two ways in which she might effect her purpose : a perseverance in hostility would have afforded the other powers an opportunity to interpose, of which they had often availed themselves with effect, because Turkey would still have been with them ; a more insidious and effectual mode of subjugation is that which, by placing the Porte under the protection of Russia, and enabling her to force it into collision with all her enemies and its own friends, would put its resources at her disposal, and exclude all interposition of other powers, because all collision would be avoided. This was the result that Russia sought to obtain from the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. This was the price she demanded for her magnanimous and disinterested aid ; and, confident that she had effected her object, she withdrew in triumph from what she believed to be the bloodless conquest of an empire.”*

By the fourth article of the treaty of Adrianople, Turkey had ceded to Russia “ all the littoral of the Black Sea from the mouth of the Kouban as far as the port of St. Nicholas.” The czar now pretended that the Circassians were rebels to his authority,

* Progress of Russia in the East.

and further pretended to blockade their coasts. A British merchant vessel, the *Vixen*, sailed to the coast of Circassia laden with salt, was seized by a Russian cruiser, and confiscated on the 25th November, 1836. The owner, Mr. Bell, demanded satisfaction from the British government, and the answer to his demand was in the following terms: "His Majesty's government considering, in the first place, that Soujouk Kale, which was acknowledged by Russia in the treaty of 1783 (1784) as a Turkish possession, now belongs to Russia, as stated by Count Nesselrode, by virtue of the treaty of Adrianople, they see no sufficient reason to question the right of Russia to seize and confiscate the *Vixen*." In this curious document Russia is accepted as evidence of the former Turkish title, and then the Russian minister is allowed to put his own interpretation on the treaty of Adrianople. Not an allusion is made to the title of the Circassians to their own sea-coast, though they protested loudly against its violation. The preceding statement rests on the authority of Mr. David Urquhart, who has also published the following extract from a letter addressed to him by Lord Ponsonby, British ambassador to the Sublime Porte, dated 23d February, 1848, referring to the capture of the *Vixen*.*

"I had been led to believe that you had changed your mind respecting Circassia. No, I did not believe it, but I heard it. I am delighted with the manner in which you have treated this subject. It is admirable. I hope you have approved of what I have done in my despatches respecting it. I considered it, from the beginning, to be next in importance to the possession of Constantinople itself; but it is only lately, comparatively speaking, that I have known the facts of the total freedom of that country from every legitimate connection or tie, and therefore the total illegality of any title assumed to it by Nicholas. If we had any man in England worth a straw, we should soon

* *Progress of Russia in the West, North, and South*, p. 318. By David Urquhart. 3d edition.

settle these matters ; but our statesmen, high or low, are pedlars without the sagacity which distinguishes the Israelite who carries about his small wares for sale to housemaids and scullions."

Another excuse was put forward by the British government for not demanding satisfaction from Russia for this outrage on a British ship, which really amounted to piracy. It is remarkable, however, as having no relation to the treaty of Adrianople, on which the first plea of acquiescence was founded.* The Earl of Durham, ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburg, addressed the following letter to Lord Palmerston, dated 13th May, 1837 : " My Lord,—With reference to the military *de facto* occupation of Soujouk Kale, I have to state to your lordship that there is a fortress in the bay which bears the name of the Empress Alexandrinsky, and that it has always been occupied by a Russian garrison." There is no need to quibble on the sense in which the word 'always' was intended to be used, but it certainly implies

* " Lord Durham was supposed to be sent over bristling with prejudice against the Russian cabinet, and bearing with him the option of peace or war. He found an officer in simple uniform in his apartments, who stepped forward to introduce himself and give him welcome. It was the Emperor Nicholas, who continued to treat the plenipotentiary with a mingled urbanity and deference, which was so flattering to his vanity, that he soon sank from the proud position of a dreaded mediator into that of a thorough-going partisan of the sovereign he had come to admonish. The emperor ordered reviews, and placed steamers and men-of-war at his disposal ; and, on his first demand, caused all the claims of all British subjects, which had been vainly advocated during years by the British legation, to be forthwith adjusted and discharged. By this means Lord Durham was so completely gained over and disarmed, that he desisted in the intercession he had come to make in favour of Poland, and in many other demands, which the fears of the imperial cabinet would at that period have conceded to a more energetic mediator. The satisfaction felt by the British residents at the prompt, unexpected, and unprecedented settlement of their pecuniary claims, by rendering Lord Durham popular, not only saved his conduct from obloquy, but has caused that of subsequent legations to be most unfavourably contrasted with it. . . . Prince Menschikoff said of Lord Durham, ' He came like a strutting peacock, and went like a plucked goose.' "—*Eastern Europe and the Emperor Nicholas*, vol. iii. p. 139.

a higher antiquity than eight years. This justification cannot by any ingenuity be connected with the treaty of Adrianople. An intelligent English traveller, commenting on the seizure of the *Vixen* and Lord Durham's letter, makes the following remarks:

“The Russians effected, after a murderous conflict with the Circassians, a landing on the shores of Soujouk Kale about the latter end of June 1836; and the fortress which figures in Lord Durham's despatch under the name of Alexandrinsky, as being always occupied by a Russian garrison, is actually situated upon the Caspian Sea; and it is a well-known fact that no fortress whatever has existed at Soujouk Kale since the Circassians expelled the Turks in 1816 from that place, and razed the building to the ground. The Russians, after taking possession of the eastern side of the bay (the entire being nearly eight miles in circumference), commenced throwing up entrenchments, and erecting huts and palisadoes for the use and protection of the military, on the bank of a small river called the Dova.”* Mr.

* “About the year 1696, the Circassians construct on the bay of Semez a fort, or rather a factory for commerce and the residence of strangers (many of whom were Tatar tribes). More than three quarters of a century thereafter, the trade with Turkey having greatly increased, two Turkish officers come and reside there for a short time, and then about 1781 depart, and are never replaced by others. Three years later, 1784, Russia having possessed herself of the territory of the Khan or Sultan of the Crimea, imputes to him the formation of some rights over the fort of Soujouk Kale, with which rights (whether imaginary or not) she invests the Sultan of Turkey. Seven years afterwards, 1791, the place being almost deserted and in ruins, and indisputably in possession of the natives, who finally destroy it by explosion on the approach of the Russians, the latter, finding it thus entirely ruined, depart and cede it to the Sultan of Turkey! After twenty years more, they return in 1811, construct a fortress on the site of the ruins; and, having occupied it for a year, dismantle and ruin it, and then cede it in this condition to the Sultan of Turkey. Eighteen years thereafter, 1829, they compel the sultan to cede it to them (together with the whole of the Circassian coast), yet do not take possession; and England immediately protests against the acquisition as contrary to treaty, and makes a reservation of British rights. Seven years thereafter, an English vessel arrives to trade there, the place continuing in ruins, and in posses-

Spencer, from whom we have quoted, further declares that the natives had expelled the Russians and destroyed their intrenchments when he visited Circassia in September 1836. The crew of the *Vixen* also gave testimony to the effect that they found the bay completely deserted by the Russians, there being neither a civil nor military functionary belonging to that people nearer than the forts of Anapa and Gelengick.*

The acquiescence of England in this pretended blockade of the Circassian coast, and still more the fact of the confiscation of the *Vixen*, and the shallow and contradictory grounds by which it was justified, convinced Russia that she was feared; and no longer apprehensive of resistance, she became more bold and insulting in her policy. On the marshy islands which form the delta of the Danube she constructed a lazaretto, under the pretence of guarding against the contagion of the plague, and then erected a battery to enforce obedience to her sanitary regula-

sion of the natives, who never alienated their rights over it. A Russian vessel arrives, and captures the English one at anchor near the ruins; and the government lawyers of England confirm the capture, because the place was then *de facto* in Russian possession—a place which now for forty-five years (save only one of Russian occupation twenty years previously) had been a ruin in possession of the natives alone; and although the place, to this day, be in ruins and in possession of the natives, the government of England rejects all English evidence to these effects: If this be not political suicide on the altar of imperial sycophancy, I know not what is.”—*Journal of a Residence in Circassia during the years 1837, 1838, and 1839.* By John Stanislaus Bell, vol. ii. p. 287.

In another passage in this volume, p. 107, Mr. Bell adduces the following argument in favour of the independence of Circassia, from which it appears plain that Turkey could not have transferred it to Russia by virtue of the treaty of Adrianople. “I may remark in passing, that this long-established Turkish trade in Circassian slaves is one of the irrefragable proofs that the Turkish government never considered Circassia as a portion of the Turkish empire; for no point of the Mussulman law is more explicit, and more clearly and generally understood and adhered to, than that which forbids any subject of the padisha (the sultan) being sold or held as a slave.”

* The Western Caucasus. By Spencer.

tions. Of course the guns commanded the mouth of the river ; and under the pretext of quarantine, military occupation was effected.

“ The quarantine in itself,” writes Mr. Urquhart, “ had no existence. I visited the whole coast in 1834; and found none. I visited Silistria when occupied by the Russians; travellers had to perform fifteen days’ quarantine, but Russians were liable to infection only by a scale : ten days for a private, five for a captain, a field-officer had three, a superior officer none. Foreign despatches were fumigated with much care, Russian despatches utterly neglected.”

The treaty of Adrianople pretended to hand over to Russia the whole “ littoral of the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Kouban as far as the port of St. Nicholas, inclusively;” but Turkey could only convey what she possessed, and the Circassians have always insisted on their political and territorial independence. They have merely acknowledged the sultan as the spiritual chief of the religion of Islam, which they profess, but never admitted they were his subjects. So soon as the Atteghai and other chiefs, particularly the Lesghians and those of Daghestan, heard of the treaty of Adrianople, their indignation was extreme. They assembled in council, and put forward to the consideration of Europe the following important document, entitled

“ THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ADDRESSED BY THE CONFEDERATED PRINCES OF CIRCASSIA TO THE SOVEREIGNS OF EUROPE AND ASIA.

“ The inhabitants of the Caucasus, instead of being subject to Russia, are not even at peace with her, but have for many years been engaged in continual war. This war they have maintained single-handed. They have received at no period encouragement or assistance from any power. While the sultan, as the spiritual head of Mahommedanism, held the supremacy of these provinces, the inhabitants on the coast of the Black Sea professing that faith

were left for their means of defence to themselves ; but lately the Porte has in every way betrayed and abandoned them. One pasha opened the gates of Anapa to Muscovite gold, telling the Circassians that they marched as friends to support the sultan against the rebel chiefs of Arminestan. Another pasha again betrayed them, and left their country by night. Since then the Circassians have sent repeated deputations to the sultan, to offer their devotion and to request assistance ; they have, however, been treated with coolness. They have also applied to Persia, with no better success ; and, finally, to Mehemet Ali, who, although appreciating their devotion, was too far off to support them.

“ In all these cases, the deputies of Circassia had been instructed to tell those who, being at a distance, did not know how intolerable was the oppression of Russia—how hostile she was to the customs, the faith, and happiness of all men—or why should the Circassians have fought so long against her?—how treacherous were her generals, and how savage her soldiers ! Therefore it was the interest of no one that the Circassians should be destroyed ; on the contrary, it was the interest of all that the Circassians should be supported. 100,000 Muscovite troops occupied now in fighting us, or in watching and blockading us, will then be fighting you ; 100,000 men now scattered over our barren and steep rocks, and struggling with our hardy mountaineers, will then be overrunning your rich plains, and enslaving your rayahs and yourselves. Our mountains have been the ramparts of Persia and Turkey ; they will become, unless supported, the gate to both. They are now the only shelter for both ; they are the doors of the house, by closing which the hearth only can be defended. But, moreover, our blood—Circassian blood—fills the veins of the sultan. His mother, his harem, is Circassian ; his slaves are Circassian ; his ministers and his generals are Circassian. He is the chief of our faith, and also of our race ; he possesses our hearts, and we offer him our allegiance. By all these ties we claim from him countenance and support ; and if he will

not or cannot defend his children and his subjects, let him think of the khans of the Crimea, whose descendant is among us.

“ Such were the words our deputies were instructed to pronounce ; but they were unheeded. They would not have been so if the sultan had known how many hearts and swords he can command when he ceases to be the friend of the Muscovite.

“ We know that Russia is not the only power in the world ; we know that there are other powers greater than Russia, who, though powerful, are benevolent—who instruct the ignorant, who protect the weak ; who are not friends to the Russians, but rather their enemies ; and who are not enemies of the sultan, but his friends. We know that England and France are the first among the nations of the globe, and were great and powerful when the Russians came in little boats, and got from us permission to catch fish in the Sea of Azof.

“ We thought that England and France would take no interest in a simple and poor people like us, but we did not doubt that such wise nations knew that we were not Russians ; and though we know little, and have no artillery, generals, discipline, ships, or riches, we are an honest people, and peaceable when let alone ; but we hate the Russians with good cause, and almost always beat them. It is therefore with the profoundest humiliation we have learned that our country is marked on all the maps printed in Europe as a portion of Russia ; that treaties, of which we know nothing, should have been signed between Turkey and Russia, pretending to hand over to the Russians those warriors that make Russia tremble, and these mountains where her footsteps have never come ; that Russia tells in the West that the Circassians are her slaves, or wild bandits or savages, whom no kindness can soften, and no laws restrain.

“ We most solemnly protest, in the name of heaven, against such womanish arts and falsehood. We answer words with words, but it is truth against falsehood. For forty years we have protested triumphantly against accusations with our arms ; this

ink, as well as the blood we have shed, declares our independence ; and these are the seals of men who have known no superior save the decision of their country,—men who understand no subtle arguments, but who know how to use their weapons when the Russians come within their reach.

“ Who has power to give us away ? Our allegiance is offered to the sultan ; but if he is at peace with Russia we cannot accept it, for Circassia is at war. Our allegiance is a free offering ; the sultan cannot sell it, for he has not bought it.

“ Let not a great nation like England, to whom our eyes are turned and our hands are raised, think of us at all if it be to do us injustice ; let her not open her ear to the wiles of the Russian, while she closes it to the prayer of the Circassian ; let her judge by facts between the people that are called savage and barbarous and their calumniators.

“ We are 4,000,000 ; but we have been unfortunately divided into many tribes, languages, and creeds. We have various customs, traditions, interests, alliances, and feuds. Hitherto we have never had one purpose ; but we have modes of government and habits of submission and command. The chief chosen by each body during war is implicitly obeyed, and our princes and our elders govern according to the custom of each place with greater authority than in the great states around us ; but from our wanting a common chief among ourselves, we, who have ruled throughout the east, have chosen always a foreign leader. We have thus voluntarily submitted to the dominion of the khans of the Crimea, and afterwards to the sultans of Constantinople, as the chiefs of our faith.

“ Russia has attempted, whenever she had overpowered any portion of our territory (and in some places she has succeeded), to reduce us to the condition of serfs, to enrol us in her armies, to make us spend our sweat and blood to enrich her, to fight her battles and enslave to her others, even our own countrymen and co-religionists. Hatred has therefore grown up between us, and

bloodshed is increasing ; otherwise we might long ago have submitted to a Muscovite chief.

“ It would be a long and sad story to relate the acts of her cruelty, her faith violated, her promises broken ; how she has encircled our country on every side, and cut us off from the necessities of life ; how she has caused to fall under the knife of the hired assassin the last remnants of our ancient houses, and left us without chiefs to obey ; how she has exterminated whole tribes and villages ; how she has bought the treacherous agents of the Porte ; how she has reduced us to poverty, and driven us into hatred and exasperation against all the world by the horrors she has committed ; while by her falsehoods she has degraded us in the eyes of the Christian nations of Europe.

“ We have lost the stocks that formerly could have collected hundreds of thousands of men under their banners ; but we are now at last all as one man in hatred to Russia. 200,000 alone of our people have been subjected by her during this long contest ; of the remainder not one has voluntarily served Russia. Many children have been stolen, and sons of nobles taken as hostages ; but such as could recollect their country have made their escape. We have among us men who have been favoured, flattered, and honoured by the emperor, and have preferred to that favour the dangers of their country ; we have among us thousands of Russians, who prefer our barbarism to the civilisation of their own country. Russia has built forts on points of our territory, but the Russians dare not venture beyond the reach of their guns. 50,000 Russians have lately made an inroad, and they have been beaten.

“ It is by arms, not by words, that a country can be conquered. If Russia conquer us, it will not be by arms, but by cutting off our communications, and making use of Persia and Turkey as if they were already hers ; by rendering the sea impassable, as if it were her own ; by blockading our coast ; by destroying not only our vessels, but those of other states which

approach us ; by depriving us of a market for our produce ; by preventing us obtaining salt, gunpowder, and other necessaries of war ; by depriving us of hope. But we are independent ; we are at war ; we are victors. The representative of the emperor, who numbers us in Europe as his slaves, who marks this country as his on the map, has lately opened communications with the Circassians, not to offer pardon for rebellion, but to bargain for the retreat of 20,000 men now surrounded by our people, and to make arrangements for exchange of prisoners."

The clandestine treaty of Unkiar Skelessi was at length detected, and England and France entered their protests against its conditions. In the mean time the armies of the Pasha of Egypt advanced from victory to victory. Sultan Mahmoud died. The youthful Abdul Medjid ascended the throne, and the great powers deemed it necessary to interpose, and arrest the advances of the rebellious vassal. Mehemet Ali was prudent and moderate ; in the midst of his triumphs, he only asked to be hereditary and independent ruler of Egypt, and to retain in his possession the pashalic of Adana and Syria. France was favourable to these pretensions, and Russia did not openly oppose them, but waited with cautious cunning to see which way the balance would incline. France indeed over-rated the power of the pasha, believing that he could and would defy both England and Austria united, in which case a Russian army might enter Asia Minor and Syria, and the ministers of Louis Philippe regarded such an event more fatal to the Ottoman Porte than the surrender of hereditary claims on Egypt. England, however, did not place so high an estimate on the resources of Mehemet Ali ; and after some negotiation a convention was concluded at London, on the 15th July, 1840, between Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, which recited that the four powers were " animated by the desire of maintaining the integrity and independence of the Ottoman empire, as a security for the peace of Europe." The convention of London

also impliedly set aside the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, for it recognised “the ancient rule of the Ottoman empire, in virtue of which it has at all times been prohibited for ships of war of foreign powers to enter the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.” On his part, the sultan undertook “to maintain this principle invariably established as the ancient rule of the empire, and, *as long as the Porte is at peace*, to admit no foreign ship of war into the straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.” The original treaty required the Porte to shut the straits when *Russia was at war*, and that obligation was now removed.

While these negotiations were pending, Baron Brunow was the Russian ambassador at the Court of St. James's. His instructions may be judged of by his conduct. Questions arose as to the mode in which the four powers should render assistance to the Sublime Porte, and the Russian envoy proposed that, if armed intervention should be necessary, “the defence of Constantinople and the Bosphorus should be assigned to Russia alone.” Lord Palmerston required that in such an event the Dardanelles should be opened to the fleets of the co-operating powers, when the Bosphorus was open to the Russian forces. But this was a demand which the baron was not authorised to concede, and which he referred to St. Petersburg. In the meantime he urged the necessity of instant recourse to active measures, “leaving the question about the Dardanelles to be settled, if and when it should arise.” He even urged the British government to take some active measures against the pasha, without awaiting the conclusion of any formal agreement with the other powers. But the British minister rejected both proposals, and made the acquiescence of Russia in his demands as to the Dardanelles a *sine quâ non*. The court of St. Petersburg could not have rejected that demand without renewing the distrust which it was so anxious to remove, and after a little consideration it gave way; but only on the condition “that a point should be

determined in the Sea of Marmora, beyond which the ships of war permitted to pass the Dardanelles should not be at liberty to advance towards Constantinople and the Bosphorus. She felt the jealousy of a lover, and could not with complacency permit any one else to approach the object of her affections. This puerile demand was obviously untenable, and is worth recording only as an indication of character and statement.*

France had been no party to the Convention of July 1840; but on the 13th July, 1841, this state of isolation terminated, and by a new treaty of that date the five powers bound themselves to respect the rights and promote the consolidation of the Ottoman empire. The capture of Acre by Sir Robert Stopford, and the successes of Commodore Napier in Syria, soon demonstrated the weakness and prostrated the strength of Mehemet Ali. Peace was concluded. The revolted pasha was confirmed in the hereditary government of Egypt; but he had to surrender the island of Candia and the pashalics of Adana and Syria, with the exception of the ancient Palestine.

CRACOW AND HUNGARY.

In consequence of the third division of Poland in 1795, Cracow, in Gallicia, fell to the lot of Austria. In 1809 Napoleon re-annexed it to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. The Congress of Vienna constituted Cracow a free, independent, and neutral city. It was the last fragment of the ancient kingdom of the Jagellons.

On the 17th February, 1846, an insurrection broke out in this little state, not of a political but of a social character. The doctrines of Fourier and St. Simon had become familiar to the peasantry of Gallicia, and some of the nobles shared in the popular delusion of community of goods. On the 22d February a provisional government was formed, and published a manifesto

* Progress of Russia in the East, p. 183.

of its principles. "Let us endeavour," it proclaimed, "to establish a community in which every man will enjoy the fruits of the earth according to his deserts and capacity; let all privileges cease, let those who are inferior in birth, intelligence, or physical strength, obtain without humiliation the unfailing assistance of communism, which will divide among all the absolute proprietorship of the soil, now enjoyed by a small minority. Let all imposts, whether paid in labour or in money, cease; and let all who have fought for their country have an indemnity in land taken from the national property." This was the signal for anarchy, confiscation, and internecine war. Such was the terror inspired, that the Austrian general, Collin, who had entered Cracow at the request of the senate, evacuated the town on the approach of Count Patelsky at the head of 2000 peasants armed with scythes. The senators fled with the troops. A committee of public safety and a national club were formed; for this first success emboldened the people to hope that they could re-establish the whole of Poland.

The Gallician peasants, who had long hated the nobility, now wreaked their vengeance on that proscribed class. Their mansions were burnt, their property pillaged; their wives and children massacred. It was a war of extermination against all that was aristocratic. The Austrian authorities have been accused of exciting these furies, the more readily to widen the revolution by arraying the working people against the proprietors of the soil. Such a policy may, though deserving unqualified condemnation, lead to speedy success. General Collin surrounded Cracow with his troops, seized all the positions commanding the city, on them planted cannon, and threatened bombardment unless the insurgents immediately surrendered, and gave hostages for obedience. A show of resistance was offered by the Dictator Wisziewsky, who threatened to construct barricades. While the negotiations were pending, a Russian battalion of infantry, supported by some Cossacks, entered the city. Within three days they were fol-

lowed by the Prussians, to whom the insurgents surrendered at discretion.

The fall of Cracow excited a lively interest in London and Paris, France and England having guaranteed its independence as parties to the treaty of Vienna. Lord Palmerston expressed his opinion in the following terms :—" I have too high an opinion of the sentiments which must animate the three powers, to doubt of their acting towards Cracow in any other spirit than that of the treaty of Vienna. Those governments are too intelligent not to perceive that the treaty of Vienna must be considered in its integrity, and that no government is permitted to make a choice of those articles which it may wish to preserve or violate. I must add, that if there are any powers who have signed the treaty of Vienna who are specially interested in its faithful execution, they are the German powers ; and I am sure that it cannot have escaped the perspicacity of those powers, that if the treaty of Vienna is not good on the Vistula, it must be equally bad on the Rhine and the Po."

M. Guizot forwarded a protest to Vienna against the incorporation of Cracow with the Austrian empire. " Nothing," said the French minister, " more compromises a government than an avowal of its inability to fulfil, even slowly, its own promises, and the hopes which it has excited. The destruction of the small state of Cracow may deprive Polish conspirators and insurgents of some means of action, but it must also foster and irritate the feelings in which these deplorable enterprises have so frequently and so obstinately originated, and, moreover, weaken the influences by which they might be prevented. It enfeebles throughout Europe the principles of order and conservatism, and strengthens blind passions and violent designs."

In April 1846 conferences on this grave subject were opened at Vienna. Prussia proposed to retain Cracow as an independent and neutral state, under the protectorate of the three powers, which Russia and Austria opposed. Other discussions took place,

in which there was no unanimity. At length Prince Metternich addressed a note to the French government, dated the 6th November, 1846, which terminated with the following words :—
“ The conditions on which Cracow was constituted an independent state once vitiated, lose all their essential qualities. Its institutions are annihilated, its neutrality is violated, its administration is disorganised ; and it is not possible to reconstruct what has ceased to exist. That existence reposed on the principle of a pacific neutrality, and Cracow only wished for war. That war Cracow has carried on during fifteen years of machinations, sometimes concealed, sometimes open, and maintained it up to the very moment when recourse to arms became general. The natural and obvious consequences of these relations is, that the city and its territory must revert to that one of the powers to which it formerly belonged. This reunion is founded on the conviction of the three powers, that it is one of absolute necessity, which they do not hesitate to avow.”

Prince Metternich did not always entertain those opinions. On the 9th February, 1818, he expressed himself thus :—“ The final act of the Congress of Vienna is undoubtedly the fundamental law of the present political system of Europe, since it has been sanctioned by the assent of all the states of which that system is composed. For this reason, the arrangements and principles which are set down on this act, whether they regard any European state directly or indirectly, have been obligatory on all.” However, after the free town of Cracow was suppressed, he asserted that the three northern powers had a right to act without the co-operation of the other powers who had signed the treaty of Vienna, and even in defiance of their wishes and protests. Cracow was formally annexed to Austria on the 11th of November, 1846 ; and thus disappeared the last remnant of Polish nationality. The insurrection of Cracow was but a passing cloud. The French revolution of 1848 was the eruption of a volcano which shook Europe to its centre. As soon as the Emperor Nicholas heard

the explosion, he addressed the officers of his guards, simply saying, "Gentlemen, the throne of Louis Philippe is overthrown; prepare to mount your horses." But it was not against external dangers that his first efforts were directed. In spite of the vigilance of the Russian police, secret societies had again been formed, as in the reign of Alexander; their existence was known, and it was feared they might act when they became aware of the Parisian insurrection. A semi-official manifesto was accordingly published in the St. Petersburg Journal, which bears every mark of the emperor's composition or dictation, and was well calculated to shake the nerves of undetected conspirators.

"The pernicious doctrines which caused troubles and revolts throughout all Western Europe, and which threaten completely to destroy order and the prosperity of nations, have unfortunately found an echo, though a feeble one, in our own country. But in Russia, where a holy faith, the love of the monarch, and devotion to the throne, based on the national character, have been preserved unshaken in every heart, the malevolent action of a handful of men, utterly null in point of influence, for the most part young and destitute of morals, dreaming of the possibility of trampling under foot the most sacred rights of religion, the obligations of law, and the claims of property, could only assume a dangerous development in case the government had not discovered the evil in its source. The result of a Commission of Inquiry is, that a certain number of young men, some really perverse in heart and mind, others imprudent victims to perfidious insinuations, had formed a secret society, having for its object the violent overthrow of our political organisation, and to substitute anarchy in its place. Blasphemies, audacious propositions directed against the sacred person of the emperor, acts of the government represented in the falsest light, such was the programme of these meetings, such were the questions discussed while awaiting the moment to put their infamous projects into execution. By order of his majesty the Commission of Inquiry was instituted.

This Commission, after five months of searching investigations, has prepared and delivered its report. His imperial majesty has deigned to accord a full pardon to all who were ensnared into the conspiracy, whether by accident or inconsiderateness. As to the real criminals, they were judged by a court-martial, whose decision declared the accused guilty of the crime of conspiring to overturn the existing laws and the political order of the empire, and condemned them to be shot. They were twenty-one in number.* His majesty the emperor, after having made himself acquainted with the report, has deigned to direct his attention to the circumstances which, to a certain extent, may mitigate the sentence, and, in consequence, ordains as follows:—The judgment shall be read to the twenty-one convicts in presence of the assembled troops; and after all the preliminaries of the execution of sentence of death shall have been performed, it will be announced to them that the emperor spares their lives, and that in commutation of the sentence pronounced against them, they shall be deprived of all their civil rights, and condemned in proportion to their degrees of culpability,—some to hard labour in the mines, others to hard labour in fortresses, others to incorporation with different corps of the army, after having undergone a longer or shorter imprisonment. Thus the guilty, who have merited the sentence of death according to law, commuted by the inexhaustible clemency of the emperor, will undergo a just punishment. May this culpable attempt serve as a warning and a salutary example to young men already perhaps led astray, but not yet criminal! May parents especially direct their particular attention to the moral education of their children, and convince them from their earliest years, that a holy faith, love of the sovereign, devotedness to the throne, with obedience to the laws and the established authorities, are the only firm foundations of the tranquillity of *states*, as they are of public and private property!”

* Their names and vocations were given, but need not be repeated.

The attempt at disturbing the internal peace of Russia being thus frustrated, the emperor observantly watched the movements of events in other countries; and his attention was soon drawn to the revolution at Bucharest. Russia had long claimed and exercised a protectorate over the Danubian principalities. An imperial manifesto, dated the 31st July, 1848, announced that, in conjunction with the sultan, the emperor would intervene in the affairs of the insurgent provinces, under the usual pretext of defeating any effort that might be made "to impair the integrity of the Ottoman empire, now more essential than ever to the maintenance of general peace." Circumstances have clearly shown that this integrity was to be preserved, not for the benefit of the sultan, but for the advantage of the czar, as the latter, ever contemplating the seizure of Turkey, could not be contented with a dismembered empire. The convention of Balta Liman was concluded with the Sublime Porte, by which Russian troops were to occupy the principalities for five years.

Graver interests soon occupied the attention of the emperor of Russia. The success of the Hungarian revolution threatened the dismemberment of the Austrian monarchy, and even the deposition of the House of Hapsburg. The triumph of rebellious subjects in any part of Europe was hateful to the policy of the court of St. Petersburg; but the independence of Hungary was the more to be dreaded, as twenty thousand Poles were fighting in the ranks of the Magyars. If victorious, they might draw their swords in defence of Lithuania, Warsaw, and Posen. Russian interests therefore prompted the Emperor Nicholas to send his army into Hungary; and he had the tact to persuade the Emperor of Austria that the aid afforded was purely disinterested. He established a claim for future gratitude, while he was really fighting his own battle on a foreign soil. The Russian manifesto, dated the 8th May, 1849, was conceived in the following terms:—

“ By our manifesto of the 14-26 of May of last year, we in-

formed our faithful subjects of the evils which had befallen Western Europe. At that date we declared our intention of combating the enemies of public order wherever they might be found—of protecting the honour of the Russian name and the inviolability of our frontiers, identifying our own person in indissoluble union with our holy Russia. Since this, disturbances and seditious movements have never ceased in the east of Europe. Culpable enterprises have led astray the credulous mob by the deceitful illusion of a happiness which never arose from anarchy and licentiousness. The criminal attempts have extended to the east, in the principalities adjoining our empire in Wallachia and Moldavia, subject to the Turkish government. The entry of our troops and of the Ottoman troops into these provinces has been sufficient there to establish and maintain tranquillity; but in Hungary and Transylvania the efforts of the Austrian government, divided by war on another point with national and foreign enemies, have proved up to this day unavailing in the conquest of revolt. The insurrection, supported by the influence of our traitors in Poland of the year 1831, and by reinforcements of refugees and vagabonds from other countries, has given to this revolt a most menacing character. In the midst of these disastrous events, his majesty the Emperor of Austria has invited us to assist him against the common enemy: we cannot refuse that service. After having invoked the God of battles and the Master of victories to protect the just cause, we have ordered our army to march to stifle revolt, and annihilate audacious anarchists who threaten the tranquillity of our provinces. Let God be with us, and none can resist us, of which we are convinced. Such are the sentiments of all our subjects. Every Russian shares in this hope, and Russia will fulfil her holy mission.”

At the same period the Emperor of Austria published the following proclamation:—“It is in conformity to our desire, and perfectly in accordance with our wishes, that the Russian armies appear in Hungary, in order promptly to terminate, by every

means in our power, a war which devastates our fields. Do not regard them as enemies of your country, but as friends of your sovereign, whom they are seconding in his firm resolve to deliver Hungary from the heavy yoke of bad subjects and foreigners. The Russian troops will observe the same discipline as my troops, will protect persons, and act with the same rigour in suppressing revolt, till the blessing of God confers victory on the just cause."

The Polish generals Bem and Dembinski were "our traitors in Poland," at the head of 20,000 of their countrymen. It was against them specially that Russia acted, as their success might prove her ruin. The subjoined letter from Prince Adam Czartoryski, dated Paris, 5th June, 1849, throws a full and clear light on the tactics of the Polish patriots who drew their swords in defence of Hungarian liberty:*

"I am happy that you have afforded me the opportunity of expressing my joy and congratulations on the favourable turn which the Hungarian war took immediately after your arrival, and on the important victories you have gained. The perilous moment approaches; indeed, it has already arrived. The Russian troops are beginning to operate in concert with the Austrians. Let us implore the assistance of God, who has protected you, general, and who, I trust, will lead you to fresh victories, till you have effected the deliverance of your country. I fear, however, new misunderstandings and disobedience; I fear that the chief command will not be restored to you. It is to such misunderstandings that I attribute the prolonged inaction of your arms during the precious time in which the forces of the enemy were not rallied after their defeat.

"This inquietude may, indeed, at my distance from the scene of action, give me a groundless anxiety. I am sure, general, after your written declarations, that you have not ceased to desire

* This letter was addressed to General Dembinski.

a reconciliation with the Slavonians. Justice commands it, the interests of the Magyars compel it, as well as their security in the future, their salvation at the present, and the possibility of a happy defence against the immense forces of our enemies, who increase more and more; and, even in case of success, they cannot be vanquished in a moment. At what moment and in what manner our nation ought to prepare to take a part in the approaching conflict, should be the subject of your constant meditations. I think that Poland, dispirited by so many losses, fettered by so many misfortunes, should be left in the background as long as possible. This view of the matter accords perfectly well with what you have expressed in your letter. Let the Poles fight under the banners of the Magyars, but let the kingdom of Poland be reserved for the final blows; and let not its ruin be sealed by partial risings, badly organised, which, at each successive failure, inflict deplorable evils on the country. There is another and powerful reason for abstaining from premature movements. We know that the seeds of discontent are sown in the Russian army; those seeds will perish if the Poles rise too precipitately. The Russians have now in their thoughts only the Hungarian war, and we must leave it to time for the seeds to germinate. We should operate on the territory in possession of Russia; we ought to carry war into Lithuania and the Ukraine before permitting insurrection in the kingdom. Neither ought the Poles of Cracow or Gallicia to stir till the regular Hungarian troops have entered their country; but the most energetic manner of acting against Russia would be to send an expedition into the Caucasus. The Polish officers of the army which marches against you are sent into the Caucasus, as the Lithuanian officers were during our war. There it is that those Polish officers could come to an understanding with you and the Cossacks. It is necessary that every thing should be conducted by Polish officers, and that the Polish spirit should dominate. Funds are necessary to purchase arms, and pay the soldiers and officers. Those funds the Mag-

yars alone ought to furnish, as their own cause is immediately interested. You have already thought of this, General, and you state that they have advanced 10,000,000 of francs on your signature. That sum should be applied to the general wants that may arise; but a considerable portion—say 2,000,000 or 3,000,000—should be destined to equip the expedition, which would act prior to the rising of Poland.”

The Emperor Nicholas is well served by his spies, who are scattered over Europe, and who are paid in proportion to their vigilance; and he knew well that Poland was preparing to march behind Hungary. Hence his readiness to support Austria. It falls not within our province to write a narrative of the Hungarian war; it may, however, be stated that the intervention of Russia rendered the contest too unequal. The Hungarians were defeated in several battles. General Georgey, invested with the dictatorship, surrendered to the Russian general, Rudiger; and his contemporaries have pronounced him a traitor to his country. On the 11th August, 1848, he sent the following despatch by a courier to General Rudiger:

“GENERAL,—You are no doubt acquainted with the sad history of my country. I will therefore spare you the wearisome repetition of the various events which have been so fatally enchaind together, and which from day to day have pushed us more and more into a desperate struggle—at first for our liberties, afterwards for our lives. The better, and I venture to say the larger, part of the nation did not lightly engage in this struggle; but after having been drawn into it by its relations with very many honourable men, who did not, indeed, belong to the country, it persevered with honour, firmly, though without success.

“The policy of Europe required his Majesty the Emperor of Russia to ally himself with Austria to conquer us, and rendered a longer resistance on our part impossible. The struggle is now at an end; many good and true Hungarian patriots foresaw and

predicted it. History will one day proclaim why the majority of the provisional government shut its ears to those warnings. That government no longer exists. In the hour of the greatest danger it showed itself most weak. As to myself, a man of action, whose deeds I venture to say have not been sterile, I have this day satisfied myself that any further effusion of blood would be useless and fatal to Hungary, as, indeed, I was convinced from the moment Russia intervened. I have therefore invited the provisional government to lay down its power, its existence from day to day rendering the state of Hungary more and more deplorable. The provisional government has recognised this truth, has abdicated its functions, and deposed its authority in my hands. Following my own convictions, I take advantage of that circumstance to avoid the effusion of blood, and rescue my peaceful fellow-citizens, whom I can no longer defend, from the horrors of war. I ground my arms; and by taking that course I possibly give an impulse to all the chiefs of the Hungarian army to follow my example, so soon as they are convinced that this is the best that can be done for Hungary.

“In thus acting, I place my confidence in the well-known generosity of his Majesty the Czar; and I indulge the hope that he will not abandon to a melancholy fate so many of my brave companions in arms, who, formerly officers in the Austrian army, were drawn by circumstances into a war against Austria. I earnestly hope that he will not deliver up the Hungarian people, crushed by misfortunes, to the blind vengeance of their enemy. It would suffice, perhaps, were I the expiatory sacrifice for all.

“I address this letter to you, General, because you gave me the first proofs of consideration, which have won my confidence. Hasten, then, if you desire to stop the effusion of blood, to proceed to the mournful ceremony of disarming with the briefest delay; but please to take all necessary measures that this afflicting spectacle has no other witnesses than the troops of his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia; for I solemnly declare that

I would rather annihilate my whole army in a hopeless combat against unequal forces, than ground my arms unconditionally before Austrian troops.

“ To-morrow, the 12th August, I march to Vilagos ; the day after (13th) to Borosjeno ; on the 14th I shall be at Beel. I advise you of these points, General, that you may place your troops between my soldiers and the Austrian army. In case this manœuvre should not succeed, or my army should be too closely pressed, I will endeavour to repulse any attack, and march on Grosswardein, to overtake the Russian army by that route, the only one before which my troops will voluntarily lay down their arms. I await, General, your reply with the shortest delay, and conclude by expressing my unbounded respect for you personally.”

This offer, being unconditional, was accepted ; and on the 15th August, 1849, Georgey, with eleven generals and other officers, was constituted a prisoner of war. The Hungarian commander-in-chief immediately ordered all his dependent commanders to submit. The fortresses of Arad and Peterwardein obeyed. Comorn refused ; and the garrison, commanded by General Klapka, held out in that last bulwark of Hungary to the 28th September, 1849, when he was granted an honourable capitulation. Thus terminated that eventful struggle.

The emperor then published the following manifesto on 17th August, 1849 :

“ ‘ Russia will fulfil her holy mission.’ Such were the words that we addressed to our well-beloved subjects when we announced to them, according to the desire of our ally, the Emperor of Austria, that we had commanded our armies to stifle the war in Hungary, and there establish the legitimate authority of the emperor. Under the protection of God, that object has been accomplished. In less than two months, our brave troops, after numerous and brilliant victories in Transylvania and under the walls of Debreczin, have marched from victory to victory—from Gallicia to Pesth, from Pesth to Arad, from the Bukowina and

Moldavia to the Banat. Finally, the bands of insurgents, hurled back in every direction—from north to east by ourselves, from the west and south by the Austrian army—have laid down their arms before the Russian army, appealing to our mediation to solicit a magnanimous pardon from their legitimate sovereign. After having holily performed our promise, we have ordered our victorious troops to return within the limits of the empire. With a heart penetrated with gratitude to the Dispenser of all blessings, we cry out, from the innermost recesses of our soul, *Nobiscum Deus! audite populi et vincemini, quia nobiscum Deus!*”

THE RUSSIAN NOBILITY.

It is certain that ancient Russia never possessed an indigenous nobility. Novgorod, its principal city, which ruled over the surrounding territory, was the seat of a republic. The people were in a constant state of anarchy, troubles being excited by ambitious parties equally balanced; and it was at length agreed to invite a foreign ruler. The Varangian prince Rurik, and his two brothers, Sinav and Trevor, arrived in Russia in the year 862, and were raised to supreme power by the free choice of the nation. According to Storch, the empire of Rurik extended over those territories now known as the governments of Revel, Riga, Polotsk, Pskoff, Wyberg, St. Petersburg, Novgorod, Smolensko, Okonetz, Archangel, Vladimir, Jaroslaf, Kostroma, and Vologda.* The Varangians immediately changed the political institutions of the country, the natives being excluded from all responsible offices. Rurik assumed the title of grand-duke, and the earliest aristocracy were his followers, and consequently of foreign origin. By virtue of his prerogative, he bestowed principalities on his sons and his two brothers, who became nobles of ducal blood. Rurik at first took up his personal residence at Staraia Ladoga.

* Tableau historique et statistique de l'Empire de Russie, par Henri Storch, tome i. p. 41.

To his brother Sinav he gave Bielo-Ozero, and to Trevor Izborsk. These cities became the capitals of the country subjected to those princes. They died early, not leaving children, when Rurik united their dominions to his own. In the fourth year of his reign he transferred the seat of government to Novgorod.

The Slavonians dwelling on the Dneiper, oppressed by the Kozars, demanded the aid of Rurik, requesting as their ruler a prince of his house. He sent one of his sons, who conquered the Kozars, and established himself at Kief, which became the second capital of Russia, but dependent on the government of Novgorod.

Vladimir the Great, who died in 1015, divided his empire among his twelve sons. Each claimed to be a grand-duke; nobles were multiplied, and also intestine divisions; and a third ducal sovereignty was founded at Vladimir, in White Russia. This became for a time the most powerful of all the kingdoms of Russia, especially when the country was under the Tatar yoke. The seat of government was established at Sousdal, afterwards at Vladimir; at length it was removed to Moscow, founded in 1147 by George I. All these principalities struggled against each other for pre-eminence. Novgorod, Kief, and Vladimir desired a monarchico-republican government; but after various convulsions, they fell entirely under the grand-dukes of Moscow. Each of these petty states, ruled by a descendant of the house of Rurik, claimed its own prerogatives, and the princes who ruled them created from their immediate partisans an aristocratic order; and thus nobles spread throughout Russia in the first two centuries after the arrival of the Varangians.

There has been some controversy as to the true meaning of titles of honour among the Russians; and on this point the old German traveller Herberstein is a high authority. "The title of duke among these people," observes that writer, "is given by the word 'knes'; nor, as I have already said, have they ever had any higher title than that, with the addition of the word 'great'; for all the other dukes who only held one principality were sim-

ply called 'knes;' but those who held several principalities, and other 'knesi' under their command, were called 'veliki knesi'—that is, grand-dukes. The lowest title or dignity among them was that of the boyars, who held the rank of our nobles or knights; but with us, as also in Hungary, they only obtain the name of counts." According to the learned English editor of Herberstein, the word "knes" is more properly represented by "knyaz," and he is of opinion that the correct meaning is prince, not duke.*

The etymology of the word czar has also led to some curious discussion. According to Herberstein, "Czar, in the Russian language, signifies king; but in the common Slavonic dialect among the Poles, Bohemians, and the rest, through a certain resemblance of sound in the last, which is the most important syllable, czar (or creszar) would be understood as emperor or kaiser. In the same manner, all who are not skilled in the Russian idiom or mode of spelling (such as the Bohemians, the Poles, and even the Slavonians, who are subjects to the kingdom of Hungary), call the king by another name,—namely, krall, kyrall, or koroll. They think a kaiser or emperor should only be called czar; and hence it came that the Russian interpreters, hearing this prince thus called by foreign nations, began themselves to call him emperor; and they think that the name of czar is more noble than that of king, although that is its real meaning. But if you will examine all their histories and sacred scriptures, you will find every where that czar is put for king, and kessar for emperor. By the same mistake, the emperor of the Turks is called czar, though he has never borne any more distinguished title than that of king, viz. the ancient name of czar. Thus the European Turks, who speak the Slavonic language, call Constantinople Czarigrad, which means the Royal City."

The editor appends the following remarks in a note: "The

* Notes upon Russia, published by the Hakluyt Society, 1852.

derivation of the word 'tsar' or 'czar' has been the subject of much discussion among etymologists. Constantine Oikonomos objects to confounding what he calls the ancient Slavonic word 'tsar' with the much more recent Latin word 'Cesar;' and says that the mistake has arisen from the incorrect mode adopted by Europeans of representing the Russian word 'tsar' by the ill-invented form of 'czar.' Reiff, on the other hand, gives the word as a primitive, and describes it as expressed in Croatian by 'czar,' or 'czeszar,' from the Latin 'Cesar.' The sentence in the original Latin is not very clear. The editor has inserted the Croatian form, 'czeszar,' in brackets, by way of suggesting an explanation of Herberstein's meaning, when he speaks of the last syllable of a word, which would otherwise appear to contain but one."

According to Karamsin, "czar is not derived from Cæsar, as several learned men erroneously suppose. It is an ancient oriental word, as may be seen in the Slavonian translation of the Bible; and it was first given by us to the emperors of the east, and afterwards to the Tatar khans. It signifies, in Persic, a 'throne,' or 'supreme authority;' and it is to be traced in the termination of the names of the Assyrian and Babylonish kings, as Phalassar, Nabonassar, &c. In our translation of the holy Scriptures, Kessar is written for Cæsar; but 'tzar,' or 'czar,' is altogether a different word."

In the account of the embassy of Leon Sapieha, chancellor of Lithuania, in 1600, who represented Sigismund, king of Poland, the titles of the Russian czars, as claimed by them, are fully enumerated, as descriptive of the different provinces actually under their sceptre, or assumed to be; under which latter head they are styled "lords and dominators of the czars of Georgia, of the Kabardahs, and of Circassia."

The term "boyar," the ancient title of dignity among the nobles, is supposed to be derived from "boi," a battle, being originally given to the chiefs who surrounded the prince on the field

of battle. It was subsequently extended to all the chief dignitaries of state. "Voivode," or "voijvoda," signifies, in Russian, the "leader of an army."

The grand-dukes of Russia, at an early period, conferred on those who were eminently distinguished in battle a surname, to commemorate their valour. This practice is said to have been derived from the Romans; but it does not appear credible that so ignorant a people would have been acquainted with such a precedent. The first instance of this form of titular distinction occurred in the reign of Vladimir the Great, during one of his wars against the Petchenegs. It was proposed to terminate the controversy by a single combat between two champions. Among the Petchenegs was a man of colossal stature, athletic and muscular, who, proud of his strength, paced the bank of the river Troubeje, which divided the opposing forces, loading the Russians with every insult, provoking them by threatening gestures, and ridiculing their timidity. This imposing air was successful. The soldiers of Vladimir, awed by the gigantic figure of their adversary, submitted to these bravados; and when the day of combat arrived, they were constrained to supplicate for its postponement. At length an old man approached Vladimir. "My prince," said he, "I have five sons, four of whom are in the army. Valiant as they are, none of them is equal to the fifth, who possesses prodigious strength." The young man was summoned to the camp. Being brought before the grand-duke, he asked permission to make a public trial of his strength. A vigorous bull was irritated with red-hot irons; the young Russian stopped the furious animal in his rush, threw him to the ground, and tore his skin and flesh. This proof inspired the highest confidence. The hour of battle arrives; the two champions advance between the camps, and the Petcheguan could not restrain a contemptuous smile when he observed the apparent weakness of his adversary, who was yet without a beard; but being quickly attacked with as much impetuosity as vigour,

seized, crushed between the arms of the young Russian, he is stretched expiring on the dust. The Petchenegs take to flight on the fall of their champion; the Russians pursued and completely routed them. Vladimir loaded the conqueror, who was only a simple currier, with honours. He was raised, as well as his father, to the rank of nobility; and to preserve the remembrance of this heroic action, the prince founded the city of Pereiaslave on the field of battle, which soon obtained a distinguished rank among the cities within the principality of Kief. The name of this young Russian was Ivan Usmovitch. Vladimir made him change his name to Pereiaslave, which signifies to *obtain the victory*. This custom has been perpetuated. Catherine II. bestowed this form of title on her victorious generals, as Orloff-Tchesmensky; Potemkin-Taurid-Schesky; Suwarrow-Rimnisky. In our times, Diebitch was surnamed Sabalkanski, and Paskiewitch Erivanski.

In Russia, as in other countries, the penalty of death due to murder was commuted by pecuniary fine; and the tariff established shows clearly that a Russo-Varangian noble was of a higher grade than a Slavonic noble: in reference to the former, the fine was 80 grifnas; in reference to the latter, it was only 40 grifnas; marking the importance of their relative dignities. In process of time the two races were fused by intermarriages; and the old distinctions fell into desuetude, and ultimately disappeared. The boyars, in ancient times, were compelled to appear at court, or go to war, or to accept an embassy, as the grand-duke ordered, and at their own expense; excepting the younger sons of nobles of slender fortune, who were maintained by the government, receiving a slight annuity during good conduct; for the annuity was always revocable. Those most favoured had districts, towns, or villages assigned to them, according to their rank and responsibility. The boyars acted as local governors over their respective localities, and paid annual tributes to the czar; compensating themselves by exacting fines from the

poor. Tenures of this kind were seldom granted for a longer term than a year and a half; so that till land was made hereditary, the sovereign held the nobles in complete subjection and dependence. Even in times of convulsion, when the opportunity was favourable for resistance, the Czar Boris Godounof compelled the boyars to let him have half the overplus of their corn-magazines at half-price to give to the poor during famine.

It has already been stated that during the minority of Peter the Great, his brother, the Czar Feodor, burnt all the archives and muniments of the nobility, to put an end to the frivolous and disorganising claims of precedence which were continually being urged, to the detriment of the public service. By that act, the whole order of nobility was placed on a level; and it was thenceforward ordained that every noble, under the penalty of severe punishment, should serve the crown in any capacity that the czar might ordain.

Up to the reign of Peter III., none could be admitted to the rank of nobility, but those who had served the crown in a military or civil capacity; but that czar abolished those conditions. The Russian code contains the following provision: "The Russian nobility and all their descendants shall for ever enjoy, and through all generations, the liberty of entering into the general service of the state; but they shall not be compelled to do so, unless an emergency arises, when the express and personal order of the sovereign may suspend this exemption." This was the case in 1812, in the war against France, when the whole people were summoned to resist the invasion of Napoleon. However, this law of Peter III. was practically a dead letter; for he who did not serve, lost caste; and if no member of a family served during two generations, the privilege of nobility was lost. "Nobility," says the Russian code, "is conferred in consequence of the high qualities and virtues of men, who, in ancient times exercised the high offices of state, and distinguished themselves by their services; and having transmitted those services, as well as

the merits attaching to them, acquired for their posterity the title of *noble-born*. They are called well-born, who descend from ancestors *well-born*; and they also who receive that title from the monarch."

Russian nobility is divided into two classes, hereditary and personal. The czar can create nobles by patent, but they are extremely rare; and the usual titles are prince, count, and baron. There are fourteen grades in this aristocratic hierarchy, rising in the army from an ensign to a field-marshal. The ensign holds the 14th, or lowest grade. A similar rule is observed in the classification of the civil service. Peter the Great decreed that an ensign who occupied the last step on the military ladder, should enjoy the honours of hereditary nobility; and in the civil service the same privilege was conferred on those who had reached the eighth step. By this arrangement Russia soon swarmed with nobles; and their multiplicity degraded the order. The system was changed in 1845. The regulations of that date only confer on an ensign personal nobility; and the grade of a staff-officer must be reached before hereditary nobility is bestowed. In the civil service the fourteenth grade, which corresponds to that of an ensign in the army, only gives the rank of an ordinary citizen; the ninth grade entitles to personal nobility; and hereditary nobility only begins with the fifth grade.

Catherine II. divided the empire into governments in 1785, and gave them an organic constitution, modelled, in a great degree on the system which prevailed in Sweden and Finland. The nobility resident in each government formed a corporation, under a marshal of the nobility, who was chosen by election, the voters being limited to the aristocratic class; and in each district, or subdivision of each government, there was a noble corporation. The members met every three years and deliberated freely. The corporation had a seal, archives, a secretary, and a treasury. The governor of the province is excluded from the debates. Haxhausen states, that these noble corporations "can punish its mem-

bers, and expel criminals, or those whose honour is tainted. It keeps registers of the birth of nobles. Each corporation has a standing committee, which, in conjunction with the committees of the towns, fixes the several allotments of taxation. It falls within the cognisance of the standing committee to examine all doubtful or disputed titles to nobility; and it can punish those landowners who maltreat their slaves, and appoint guardians or trustees to those who are notoriously dissipating their fortunes and dilapidating their estates. Almost all administrative and police regulations are under the control of the noble corporations. The Russian noble can only lose life, fortune, and honour by a legal judgment of his peers; and that judgment must be specifically sanctioned by the emperor, before sentence can be executed. The nobles are exempted from capital punishment, from personal tax, from the recruiting laws, and from billeting soldiers on their property."

However, the power of the Russian hereditary aristocracy is rather nominal than real. It has little *esprit-de-corps*, and seldom unites in common action or policy. When compared with the peerage of England, it sinks into insignificance. The people show it no respect; and it has no hold on public opinion. Not having sprung from a feudal source, it cannot appeal to traditions, so powerful in England. In presence of the government of the czar, it is submissive and terrified. No Russian Earl de Warrenne would dare to say to the emperor: "My ancestors coming in with Rurick the Varangian won these lands by the sword, and by the sword I will defend them against any that will take them away; for that king did not conquer for himself alone, neither did my ancestors assist him for that end." The Russian nobles have frequently conspired against their sovereigns, and murdered them, but what the English term constitutional resistance is unknown; and this makes one of the points of difference between a despotism and a limited monarchy. Yet the Russian nobility hold more than half the cultivated land of the

country, and are the almost absolute masters of twenty-four millions of serfs. But with all this wealth they crouch before the autocrat, trembling at his frown.

The order of personal nobility is known by the name of Tschin. In former times it was chiefly composed of foreign adventurers, who sought their fortunes in Russia, and were employed by the government on account of their superior knowledge ; in our days, the different civil functionaries are, with rare exceptions, natives. They are composed of the following classes : 1st. The sons of priests and widower priests, who, on the death of their wives, must return to a secular state, and generally obtain employment in some of the chanceries. 2d. The sons of subaltern functionaries, or these latter themselves, after having realised some small independence. 3d. The sons of merchants and rich manufacturers. All these endeavour to purchase peasants and small landed properties, for their means are not equal to the acquisition of large estates ; nor, indeed, could they personally superintend them, as they must devote their time to the duties of their offices. These men therefore commence by buying five, ten, or twelve serfs, and impose on them the *obrok*. The Tschin constitutes a bureaucracy ; and, as it works all the inner wheels of the government machinery, it is powerful ; the more so, because, unlike the hereditary aristocracy, it is animated by an *esprit-de-corps*, and acts in concert.

Peter the Great created the Tschin. When he returned from his travels and commenced his reforms, he calculated on the zealous co-operation of his aristocracy, but was deceived. The boyars detested his innovations, and sought to frustrate his plans. They were at that time petty kings, or chiefs of tribes, absolute in their districts. Ignorant as they were, they had the shrewdness to perceive that centralisation would be fatal to their arbitrary and irresponsible rule. The priests shared the fears of the boyars, and united with them in resistance. At this opposition the czar was profoundly irritated. He could not crush his nobles,

and determined to create a counterpoising authority. Such was the origin of the Tschin, an administrative body, entitled to aristocratic privileges, but not possessing hereditary title, or the right, originally, to hold slaves. The old boyars looked down on the Tschin with contempt; the Tschin vowed vengeance against the old boyars. The czar played off one order against the other, and thus strengthened his own authority, as he was the sole arbiter of all the disputes that arose between the two orders. Within a century from its creation, the Tschin became formidable; and its members now occupy some of the highest positions in the state. Marshal Prince Paskievitch, Count of Erivan, and Prince of Warsaw, springs from the Tschin. He is addressed as Highness, and is the only field-marshal in the Russian service. The Czar Nicolas has conferred on him the highest honours to which a subject can aspire. By a special rescript, all military honours paid to the czar himself are paid to the Prince of Warsaw, even though the czar be present. This remarkable distinction was the reward of his successful campaign against the Hungarian insurgents. To have belonged to the Tschin, therefore, is no bar to the highest advancement.

The difference of wealth, however, between the two orders of nobility is immense. Although ancestral estates are constantly in a state of division and enfeeblement, some very considerable properties still remain. Mr. James, the traveller, mentions the princely, or rather regal entertainment given by Scheremeteff to the Emperor Alexander after his coronation. The road from St. Petersburg to his country seat, for the distance of 100 versts,* was lighted with lamps for the convenience of 10,000 guests. The head of this family was reported to hold the largest possessions in Europe at that period, his property consisting, according to the Russian mode of calculation, of at least 125,000 slaves, the males alone being computed in this estimate. Of this number about 6000 were employed in his various domestic establishments.

* About 66 English miles.

At Petersburg thirty or forty servants suffice, but in the country the numbers run up to 500 or 600 ; for there the population is scanty, and there are no shops or provision stores. Hence the whole household accompany the great noble, serving the various duties of surgeons, butchers, bakers, tailors, shoemakers, &c. and perhaps fifty footmen and valets. The whip and the cudgel keep them in order. Mr. James, who travelled in Russia during the years 1813 and 1814, states, "that the value of a male slave may be at an average about 150 (silver) roubles, but the price differs in various provinces, and in some the value has been lately enhanced, by the drain of the war, to upwards of 500 roubles."

The Russian nobles frequently ruin themselves by their excessive prodigality. Narischkine, one of the favourites of Alexander, reduced himself to beggary by his enormous expenditure. Entertaining the emperor one evening at his country seat of Peterhoff, Alexander was astonished at the sumptuous magnificence displayed, and asked what was the cost. "A mere bagatelle," was the answer. "How so, a bagatelle?" "Yes, your majesty, thirty roubles at the outside." "You are joking," returned the czar. "No, sire," responded the spendthrift; "the cost of the whole entertainment is exactly equal to the cost of the stamped paper." In fact, Narischkine only paid his creditors with promissory notes and mortgages. However, this extravagance at length came to a term, and hard cash was required. Alexander suspected the embarrassment of his favourite by his dejected air, and sent him a book enclosing within the leaves 100,000 roubles. It was received, but without any acknowledgment. Some time afterwards, Alexander met him, and asked him what he thought of the book? "It is an excellent volume, sire; but I am waiting for the remainder, before I decide on the merits of the work." On the following morning, the emperor sent him a second volume, also containing notes to the value of 100,000 roubles; but on the back of it were written these words—"Second and last volume."

The members of the Tschin, when commencing their career, are, for the most part, poor, or only in moderate circumstances. Their official salaries are insufficient to keep them honest, and the parsimony of the crown renders these functionaries venal. Corruption has penetrated every department of this bureaucracy, for the highest personages are not exempt. The Czar Alexander is known to have exclaimed with the bitterest emotions, "The Tschins would rob me of my guns and vessels, if they knew where to conceal or sell them." Justice is sold in the courts of law as well as in the police courts, while colonels of regiments grow rich on the scantiest pay ; in fact, the system of pillage is universal. A very recent traveller, Germain de Lagny, narrates the following ingenious device of a high functionary to add to his fortune :

"Some years since, Count Benkendorff was summoned to the presence of the Emperor Nicholas, to receive a sum of 30,000 francs, to be devoted to pious uses. The count returned with it to his office, and after having passed some hours in the transaction of public business, ordered his carriage. As he was about to enter it, he discovered that he had lost his portfolio ; he instantly returned to his office, and searched in vain for the missing treasure. Had he lost the 30,000 francs, or had he been robbed of them ? General Kakoschkine, prefect of police, was immediately sent for, and commanded, before the following morning, to discover the thief. At the hour fixed, the prefect of police entered the cabinet of the minister, and handed over to him the 30,000 francs, saying that they had been recovered from the robber ; as to the portfolio, and the papers contained in it, the whole were thrown into the Neva. Count Benkendorff put the money into his pocket, and, by a miracle, afterwards found the lost portfolio, and in it the whole sum he had received on the previous day from the emperor. General Kakoschkine, despairing of putting his hand on the money lost or stolen, adopted the quicker course of summoning the police officers, and compelling them out of their

own funds to make good the amount which he presented to the minister.”*

Nicholas has used every effort to put an end to this system of fraud, extortion, and speculation. He authorised two intelligent Germans, natives of Courland, and attached to the imperial secretariat, to investigate all the departments, and report to him faithfully and without any reservation. The task was not easy, but it was unflinchingly and conscientiously performed; and evidence was obtained proving that the whole bureaucracy deserved the knout and Siberia. It was shown that venality had even penetrated the vestibules of the imperial cabinet. The czar shed a few tears, and consigned the report to the flames. Autocrat as he is, he could not punish the whole of the nobility, hereditary and personal, and had he done less, he would have been unjust; but he did not conceal his indignation. Oppressed with grief, he paid a visit, as was his custom, to one of his favorite ministers. The great functionary observed that the czar was labouring under some strong emotions, and respectfully asked what disturbed his equanimity? The emperor, highly excited, exclaimed, “Every one is a thief in the empire! I am surrounded by robbers! Wherever I look, I see pillage. There is but one person, only one, who can hold up his head without dishonour; and of that person I am sure,” fixing a penetrating glance on his favorite. The count, imagining that the emperor alluded to himself as the bright exception, bent his head to the earth, thanking his august master for the confidence he reposed in his honour and fidelity. But the czar quickly interrupted this hollow gratitude, by continuing his incomplete sentence—“the only person who is not a thief, and can hold up his head without dishonour, is *myself*; I am the only man in the empire who is not a public plunderer.”

* *Le Knout et les Russes.* Par Germain de Lagny, p. 151. Paris : D. Giraud, libraire éditeur, 1853.

Corruption in Russia is thus described by a native, a man of high family and great intelligence : “ Cheating is carried to such an excess in Russia, that one might be tempted to say it is in the air and in the blood. Russian commerce and manufactures are unquestionably the most dishonest in the world. China and England have had equal cause to complain of it. The Chinese, who are too suspicious to receive without examination the rolls of Russian cloth, find pieces of wood inside ; the English receive grease instead of tallow. The government has in vain repeatedly protested against these abuses, and the emperor has in vain issued decrees to suppress them. A Frenchman, who was appointed by the government to unmask all these frauds, was well nigh killed by the manufacturers ; and the officers have evidently not been proof against the seductions which he resisted, for his denunciations have had no effect. The petty shopkeepers live only by plunder ; you purchase an article in a shop, and take a different one home with you ; you must be always on your guard. All servants are notorious thieves, especially the cooks and coachmen. It may be pretty much the same every where, yet it is never carried to such an excess as in Russia. There the officers even of the public administration seize eagerly with both hands ; they do not wait till you give them something, but they beg and bargain with you, accept large presents, and do not disdain the most trifling.”* The same author thus describes the demoralisation of the higher classes : “ The peculations of persons in office are beyond all conception. All the functionaries, high and low, steal openly and with impunity, from the ammunition to the rations of the soldier, and the medicines of the hospitals ; will it be believed that they actually conceal the number of men who fall in every action till the end of the campaign, and thus continue to receive the provisions and equipment of those who have disappeared from the ranks, but who nevertheless remain on the lists till the end of the war ? In the Caucasus, where hostilities are incessant, this

* Russia under Nicholas I. By Ivan Golorine, vol. i. p. 124.

abuse had risen to an enormous excess; the ranks were thinned, yet the lists were full, as also were the pockets of the officers. The captain lives on his squadron or his company, the colonel on his regiment, the general on his brigade, and so on. On giving up the command of his corps, the general comes to an understanding with his successor, and nothing is said. The officers of police, who receive salaries of 1,000 francs, have cloaks and horses worth many thousand roubles. The heads of the police have houses, and the governors hotels. Persons in office make their fortunes much quicker in Russia than in other countries, and in some departments sooner than in others. One hand washes the other. The officers, high and low, share their gains; and woe to him who shall pretend to act with probity! the poor denounced sheep would sure to be devoured by these rapacious wolves. By the aid of money the worst causes are gained in the tribunals, and money will purchase indemnity for every crime. Does any one desire to institute a law-suit? He does not inquire whether he has better rights than his adversary, but merely examines whether he is richer. In that case, being certain of having the judges on his side, he proceeds to act. The emperor himself declares that he is powerless against this scourge, and it will be well for him if his own fortune is not stolen."

Schnitzler makes the following statement of the daring corruption which pervades the administrative system of Russia:

In April 1826 there was a grand review of the troops, the emperor being then at his magnificent palace of Tzarsko-Selo. At the moment that every body was looking at the grand sight of the ranks of men in brilliant uniforms, obeying the word of command with a punctuality and uniformity almost impossible to attain elsewhere, four men of the class of moujiks or peasants, with long beards and wearing caftans, made their appearance. They boldly marched forward, spoke to the superior officers, and explained their request, which was nothing less than to speak to the monarch. A pretension of this kind is never easily admitted

any where, but still with more difficulty in Russia, where classes are separated from one another by often insurmountable barriers, and where, for that very reason, whatever is unusual becomes a matter of suspicion. If truth ever endeavours to reach the throne, it is obliged to attempt to make its way to some mysterious channel. In a country where every body lives upon abuses, each fears, by not discountenancing officious communications, to draw upon himself the difficulties which he would not have spared a colleague or comrade. The peasants were, therefore, rather badly received. The officers did not fail to tell them that their request was absurd, and to command them to state at once the business that had brought them. Being cunning, like most of the Russians of the lower class, they were not to be caught by this snare; they declared that their business was of the utmost importance, and that they would communicate it to none but his majesty himself. This conversation did not escape the penetrating glance of the young czar; he desired to know what was its subject, and ordered the moujiks to be brought before him. They stood forth and bowed to the ground; then looking fearlessly upon him whose humble slaves they acknowledged themselves to be, yet whom they term their father, one of them boldly spoke out and explained their business. They had just discovered some incredible depredations that had taken place in Cronstadt, in a manner of speaking, before the very face of the director of the marine, brother to the head of the general staff of the fleet. The bazaar of the city, said they, is crowded with goods belonging to the crown, and stolen from its stores, dockyards, arsenals, and ships; rigging, iron-work, copper lining, and a thousand different things, which serve for fitting up ships, are heaped up in the shops by false partitions, where purchasers are introduced who come to make cheap bargains. Anchors, cables, and even cannons, are thus gradually disposed of to foreign countries, to the detriment of the treasury.

The emperor, in spite of his acquired experience, refused to

give credit to such abominable practices ; but the peasants persisted, saying they were certain of what they stated, and their language seemed to be dictated by truth. Then, with a stern countenance, he called upon them to account for their obstinate determination to see him, and for having disobeyed the officers by refusing to explain the reason of their request. " If we had made these facts known to any other than your imperial majesty," they unhesitatingly replied, " you would never have known any thing about them, and the only persons punished would have been ourselves." " Take care ! I consider you responsible for your language," said the monarch, putting an end to the conversation, but resolved to clear up the affair.

By his orders, Michael Lasareff, one of his aides-de-camp, a captain in the navy, and belonging to a rich Armenian family of Moscow, took immediately 300 men, repaired with all speed to Cronstadt, and suddenly surrounded the bazaar. Having found therein a proof of all that the peasants had stated, he put seals on the shops, left functionaries there to guard them, and went back to give an account of his mission. In a moment of vexation, Alexander had once exclaimed, speaking of his subjects, " If they knew where to put them, they would rob me of my ships of war ;" that exclamation was being realised almost to the letter ; the emperor had certainly not thought he was speaking so near the truth. Nicholas was thunderstruck at the news of such a system of robbery, and ordered the guilty to be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law. But on the night of the 21st of June following, the sky was illumined with a red glare, that reached as far as the neighbourhood of the capital ; and the next day news was received that a conflagration had destroyed the bazaar at Cronstadt, as well as immense stores of timber, ropes, hemp, tar, &c. The *Journal de Petersburg* did not even mention this disaster, and the real authors of it were never known.

Compared with the nobility of western Europe or Germany, the Russian order of nobility is positively degraded, particularly

so if it be contrasted with that of Britain. As a class they have no legislative power, no weight in the government. Owners of serfs, each is a gilded serf to the czar. Their only distinction is wealth. They are generally discontented, because they feel that they are in a false position, and humiliation is more bitterly felt by those who have travelled into other countries. In a limited monarchy, hereditary families are a barrier between the crown and the people, restraining the ambition of the one and the turbulence of the other; in a pure autocracy, they are but decorated dummies. Montesquieu has said that honour is the characteristic of a true aristocracy; but honour can take no root in a country where a single individual is absolute master. When men have sat on the throne of Russia, despotism has prevailed; when women have reigned, they have been strumpets. In such an atmosphere honour dies.

“The rights of the Russian nobility,” said a Russian professor, “consist in entering the service, if they are pleased to admit him into it; in leaving it, if he is allowed to do so; in going abroad, if he can obtain a passport; in purchasing landed property, if he has the money.”

“There is no law in Russia,” says Pouschkin; “the law is nailed to a stake, and that stake wears a crown.”

We will conclude this section by an enumeration of the Russian orders in heraldry, of which there are eight. 1. The order of St. Andrew. 2. St. Catherine. 3. Alexander Newski. 4. The White Eagle. 5. St. George. 6. St. Vladimir. 7. St. Anne. 8. St. Stanislaus.

The order of St. Andrew, the first in point of creation, as it is in importance, was instituted by Peter the Great on his return from his travels in 1689, and may be considered the blue riband of Russia.

The order of St. Catherine was instituted in 1714, to commemorate the deliverance of Peter I. at the battle of the Pruth by the Empress Catherine I., and is confined to ladies.

The order of St. George was founded by Catherine II. in 1759, and is given for military and naval exploits.

The order of St. Vladimir was created in 1782, in memory of the twenty-first anniversary of the coronation of the Empress Catherine II., and is bestowed on men of desert, both civil and military.

The order of St. Anne of Holstein was added to the Russian orders in 1797. It may be conferred on any ecclesiastic who has converted at least 100 persons not Christians, or 100 heretics, persuaded rebellious slaves to return to their duty, or set a good example to the soldiers.

The order of St. Stanislaus was established to reward those who have contributed to the welfare of the Russian empire by such services as have attracted the notice of the emperor. It was instituted in 1831.

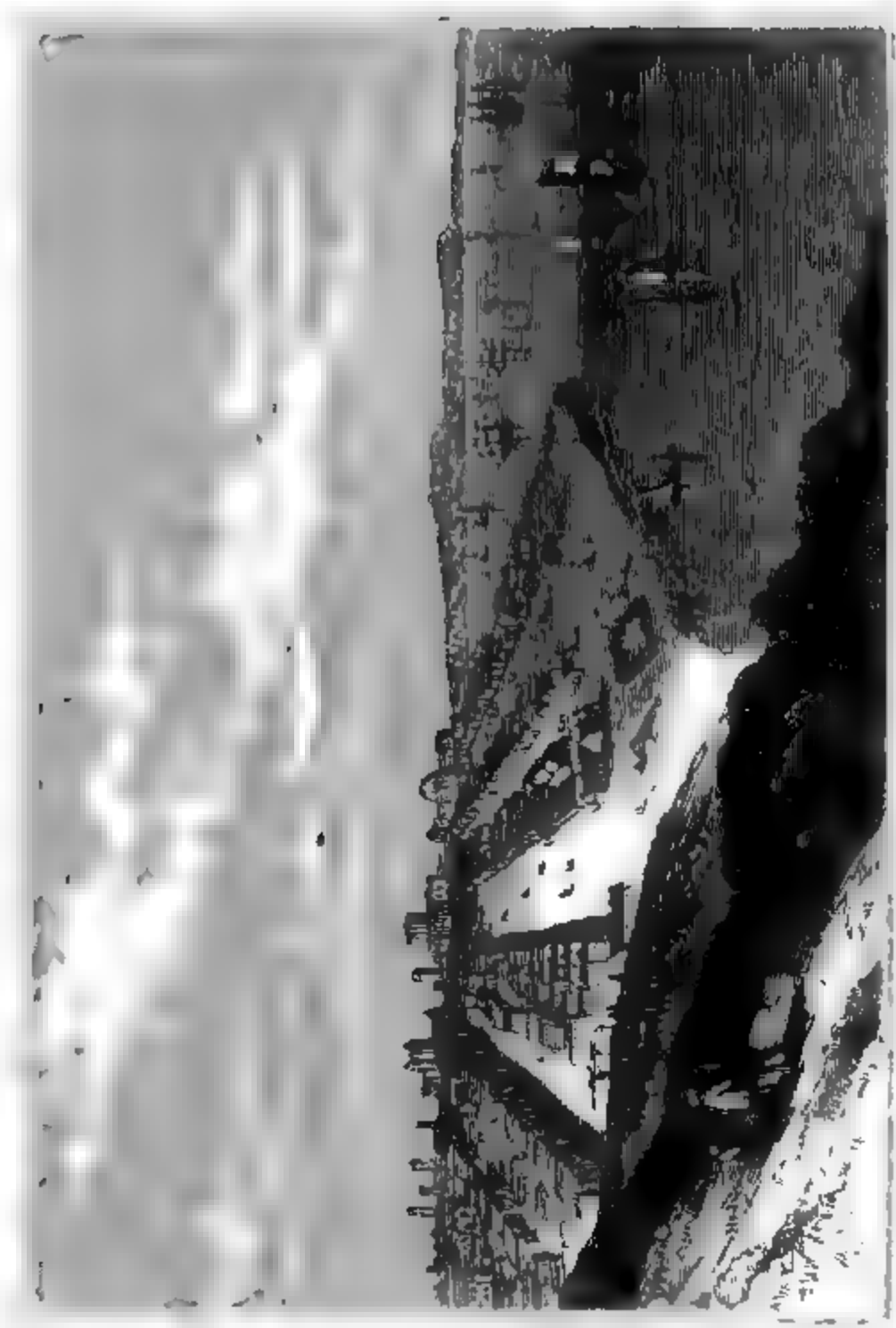
The White Eagle and St. Stanislaus are of Polish origin. The empress, who is grand-mistress of the order of St. Catherine, retains that dignity for life. The grand-master of all the others is the emperor alone. All the grand-dukes of Russia become at their baptism knights of St. Andrew, St. Alexander, the White Eagle and St. Anne; and the princes of the blood receive the same orders when they attain their majority. The grand-duchesses are invested at their baptism with the order of St. Catherine, and princes of the blood at their majority.

The order of St. Alexander Newski was founded in 1725, and is usually called the red riband.

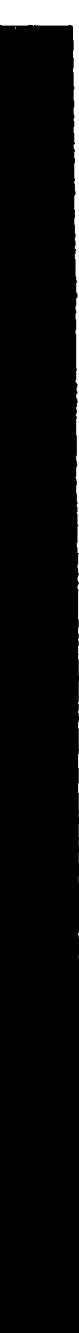
The *May Mark* was instituted on the 14th October, 1828, in memory of the Empress Maria Feodorouna, the mother of Nicholas. It is conferred for irreproachable services, but is not an heraldic order, but merely a mark of distinction.

THE RUSSIAN CHURCH.

There are three distinct epochs in the history of the Russian Church. 1st. It was ruled by the patriarchs of Constantinople,



ODESSA



who nominated the metropolitans of Kief, Vladimir, and Moscow. 2dly. In 1589 the metropolitan was nominated by the czar; but he remained perfectly independent of temporal power. 3dly. In 1723 the czar became supreme head of Church and State. At that date a synod was established with the consent of the Russian clergy and of the four patriarchs of the East; this synod was an ecclesiastical college. Before Russia had a czar she had a church; and that church mainly preserved its ancient nationality, and powerfully contributed in relieving the nation in early times from the Polish yoke.

Christianity was transmitted to Russia from Constantinople, and derived its original form from the ritual of the old Slavonian Church, founded in Moravia by St. Cyril and Methodius. The ancient seat of the metropolitan was Kief.

“The Russians openly boast in their annals,” says Herberstein, “that before the times of Vladimir and Oleg, the land of Russia was baptised and blessed by Andrew, the apostle of Christ, who came, as they assert, from Greece to the mouth of the Dneiper, and sailed up the river against the stream as far as the mountains where Kief now stands, and there blessed and baptised all the country; that he planted his cross there, and preached the great grace of God, foretelling that the churches of the Christians would be numerous; that thence he went to the sources of the Dneiper, to the great lake Volok, and descended by the river Lovat to lake Illmen, and thence passed by the river Votchor, which flows out of the same lake, to Novgorod; thence by the same river to lake Ladoga, and by the river Neva to the sea which they call Varetszkoi, but which we call the German Sea (the Baltic), between Finland and Livonia, and so sailed to Rome. Finally, that he was crucified for Christ’s sake in the Peloponnesus by Antipater.” Such is the account given in their annals.*

* Notes upon Russia; being a translation of the earliest account of that country, entitled *Rerum Muscoviticarum Commentarii*. By the Baron

In the century which preceded the invasion of the Mongols, theological literature, such as it was, had been extensively cultivated, Kief being the centre of that literary movement, which was wholly suspended during the conquest. Many Mss. exist to attest this fact. During the Tatar rule, however, no attempt was made by the conquerors to indoctrinate the Russians with the dogmas of Islamism. The priests were not molested, and rendered great services to the people in the hour of their bondage, particularly by aid given from the convents and monasteries. The germs of ancient erudition were carefully preserved in Red Russia and Little Russia ; and ecclesiastical learning revived towards the close of the fifteenth century in the struggles against the western or Catholic theology of Poland. The clergy of Kief again shone in controversy, particularly against the Protestant dogmas attempted to be enforced in the sixteenth century ; but it was at the establishment of the Russian patriarchate, when it became spiritually independent of Constantinople, that the theological movement put forth its full energy ; and then also, in opposition to liturgic reforms, arose the schism of the Staroversi, which continues to the present day.

It was during the reign of Vladimir that Christianity struck its roots deep into the soil of Russia. At the commencement of the eleventh century that prince procured architects and skilful workmen from Greece, and constructed durable and not inelegant churches. He endowed houses of education presided over by Greek teachers, who taught the young nobles whatever was then known in the sciences. In conjunction with the metropolitan see, he instituted tithes of all things to be given on behalf of the poor, orphans, the sick, the aged, strangers, prisoners, as well as for the burial of the poor. He subjected all the clergy to the

Sigismund von Herberstein, ambassador from the court of Germany to the Prince Vasiley Ivanovitch, in the years 1517 and 15 6. Printed for the Hakluyt Society. 1851.

spiritual power and jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese ; but ordered that when any controversy arose between the clergy and laymen, it should be decided by the common law of the land. After his conversion, Vladimir endeavoured to expiate the errors of his youth by restraining his passions, and almost by the abrogation of his princely prerogatives ; for he even hesitated to punish criminals. The bishops represented to him that it was no less his duty to repress vice than to reward virtue. He felt the justice of this advice, but still felt a repugnance, remarkable in so barbarous an age, to allow capital punishment to be inflicted even on the worst malefactors ; and on several occasions, when required to authorise an execution, he is said to have exclaimed, “ Who am I that I should condemn men to death ? ”

Jaroslaf, who reigned till 1054, and died in the seventy-seventh year of his age, after having filled the throne for thirty-five years, was a diligent student, when reading was rare. He collected a great number of transcribers, and had translations made of many Greek books, which were deposited in the Church of St. Sophia, built during his reign.

Alexander Newsky is celebrated among the most pious of the early sovereigns of Russia. He never undertook or terminated a campaign without ordering public prayers, and receiving episcopal benediction. He formed many institutions to maintain and extend the Christian religion. When ill health admonished him that his remaining days on earth were few, he abdicated his throne and retired to a monastery, changing his name from Alexander to Alexis. The Russian Church has placed him in the rank of the saints. Peter the Great founded a monastery to his memory, near the spot where Alexander conquered the Swedes, and had his remains removed thither. The Empress Elizabeth erected a silver tomb to him, one of the richest monuments in Europe.

Even Ivan IV., surnamed the TERRIBLE, was a benefactor to the Church, for he established a printing-press to facilitate the

reading of the Bible in his dominions. An edition of the Acts of the Apostles, which appeared in March 1563, was published at his expense.* When Pope Gregory XIII., after having successfully mediated between Ivan and the kings of Sweden and Poland, sent the celebrated Antony Possevin to Russia, in the hope of detaching it from the Greek Church and uniting it to the Holy See of St. Peter, the czar gave him this answer:—"I am Ivan, Czar of Russia, and sovereign of several kingdoms; I cannot conceive how one man can expect to possess the right of dictating laws to monarchs, and of governing their estates."

The early Church of Russia can boast of many prelates remarkable for their piety and patriotism; and, in the absence of more copious documents, their actions to some extent illustrate its history. A brief allusion to some of those illustrious men may dispel or weaken the vulgar prejudice that Russia had no eminent sons before the reign of Peter the Great. That prejudice is false in nearly every point, and certainly the Church gave martyrs to religion and heroes to the country.

A false prophet arose in 1071, during the reign of Sviatoslaf, at Novgorod; and at his instigation the populace attempted to seize and murder Bishop Theodore. That prelate did not secrete himself; but clothed in his pontifical robes, with the cross in his hand, summoned all true believers to resist the fury of the impostor. During the riot, Prince Gleb, a nephew of Sviatoslaf, hurried to the scene of tumult, and commanding the impostor to his presence, asked him what was about to happen at that instant. "Great miracles, which I shall bring about," was the prophetic answer. The bishop was firm, and his courage had already awed the multitude, when Prince Gleb split the impostor's skull with a hatchet which he had concealed under his garments.

Gregory, abbot of the monastery of St. Andrew, is remarkable

* The printing occupied ten years, and was executed by Ivan Feorodovitch and Peter Timofeyef.

for having uttered a sentiment scarcely to be expected in so barbarous an age and country. Jaroslaf had been driven from Tchernigof by Wosewolod, the son of Oleg. The Grand Prince of Kief took up arms to punish the unjust aggressor, and vowed an oath of revenge. Peace was offered to him by Wosewolod, and submission : but the grand prince feared to accept either, lest he should commit perjury. In this case of conscience he consulted Gregory, who gave him this answer : “I consent, and all the clergy with me consent, to charge ourselves with the crime of this perjury : it is better to violate an oath sworn on the cross than to shed innocent blood.”

Rotislaf, Prince of Kief, being sick, and fearing the approach of death, demanded the tonsure, a common practice among the early sovereigns of Russia. He was dissuaded by a monk named Simeon, although it was his interest to add another royal convert to the monastery ; but his patriotism triumphed. “It is God himself,” said Simeon, addressing the prince, “who has made you a sovereign ; it is he who has willed your establishment on a throne, that you may administer justice to your subjects, and be their ruler and guide ; for these purposes you should lead an active and useful life, and not shut yourself up in the solitude of a cloister. Will it therefore be a virtue in you to oppose the designs of God,—to withdraw yourself from the obligations which he has imposed on you, and be wanting in your duty to the people whom he has committed to your charge ?”

The most celebrated of all the clergy of Russia was Nikon, born, in 1613, of obscure parents, in the government of Nijni Novgorod. His father used every means to dissuade him from a monastic life, but in vain. Nikon married, and became a priest ; and after having lived ten years with his wife, by whom he had three children, who died in their infancy, he parted from her by consent. She entered the convent of Alexis, and he retired to that of Anjerscoy, situated on an island in the White Sea. In 1652, he was consecrated Patriarch of Russia, after having been

metropolitan of Novgorod. While residing there a severe famine occurred, and crowds partook of his bounty. He built four hospitals at Novgorod,—one for the infirm, another for widows, a third for orphans, and a fourth for those who had no means of subsistence. But his generosity and watchfulness over the happiness of the people did not save him from the blind furies of the unreasoning and ungrateful populace. He was nearly massacred in endeavouring to appease the tumults which arose in 1650. Rescued from savage violence, on reaching his house he confessed his sins and took the sacrament, and then went direct to the town-house, where the malcontents were assembled, whom he addressed in the following terms: “My children, you know I have always preached the truth to you; and I do so now the more willingly because I am prepared and resigned to death. In my prayers I have implored God for the health of your souls. I have come here expressly to present myself before you. If you have to reproach me with the commission of any fault, or of any disobedience to the sovereign or the state, I request of you to tell me so, and to punish me if you think fit; but let that terminate your disorders, and permit your complaints to be examined by that government which has been given to you by God himself.” These few words quelled the tumult. The streets were cleared in a few minutes by the voluntary retreat of the conspirators. To Nikon the czar committed the punishment of the rebels, to whom he behaved most mercifully, resenting none of the insults he had personally received.

During the war which afterwards broke out between Russia and Poland, Alexis confided the government of the empire to this patriarch. The plague devastating Moscow, Nikon was obliged to quit the capital to place the family of the sovereign in safety; and this he effected, after encountering the most appalling difficulties. But this truly good and great man experienced the fickleness of fortune; he was deprived of all his dignities, and degraded. When the sentence was read, he protested his inno-

cence, and bravely pronounced the decree illegal and unjust. One of his judges, the Archbishop Hilarion, loaded him with the most foul abuse, declaring him a robber, a murderer, and an adulterer. "My son," replied the patriarch, with mildness, "never let your mouth be opened but to bestow benedictions."

Nicon, when in retirement and disgrace, was still desirous of being useful to society. He employed himself in collecting and completing the chronicle of Nestor and of other ecclesiastics, which he continued to his own times.*

These slight biographical notices of the early sovereigns and prelates of Russia reflect in some degree the spirit of the age in which they lived, and redeem it from the character of complete barbarism. Whatever reproaches have been directed against the Russian Church, certain it is that the people are distinguished by their piety, however much it may savour of superstition ; and even that is a censure which they may retort on all other countries. If their social virtues are rude, and even coarse, they are not tainted by the hypocrisy of refinement. It is the patriarchal spirit, and the accompanying love of family and home, which give a tone to the popular feelings and manners of the real Russian ; and these have been, and still are, carefully fostered by the Russian Church.

Herberstein gives the following curious and interesting particulars of the ecclesiastical system of Russia when he visited that country, at the beginning of the 16th century :

* This chronicle is not properly the work of the Patriarch Nicon, whom we have seen playing a great part under the reign of the Czar Alexis. But that prelate employed some of the leisure procured him by his disgrace in collecting a good number of chronicles—collating them, correcting one by the other, perhaps sometimes in altering them ; and having done this, he made a copy of the whole, in which he placed so much confidence, that he pronounced an anathema against any one who should dare to make an alteration in it. This work brings us down to the reign of the Czar Alexis ; but the two volumes that are printed conclude at the invasion of Russia by the Tatars. The chronicle of Nicon was printed in two 4to volumes at St. Petersburg in 1767. *TOOKE'S History of Russia.*

“Those who are consecrated secular priests are, for the most part, such as have served a long time in the churches as deacons ; but no one is consecrated deacon unless he be married,—whence they are very often married and made deacons at the same time. But if the betrothed of any deacon is in bad repute, he is not ordained deacon ; it is necessary that he should have a wife of unblemished character. When the wife of a priest is dead, he is immediately suspended from officiating ; but if he live in chastity, he may be present in the choir, as a minister, with the other ministers of the church, at the offices and other divine engagements. Indeed, it was the custom formerly for widowers who lived in chastity to administer the sacraments without blame ; but now the custom is introduced that no widower be permitted to perform the sacraments, unless he enter some monastery, and live according to rule. If any priest who is a widower enter on a second marriage (which he is free to do), he has nothing in common with the clergy ; nor does any priest whatever dare to administer the sacraments, to baptise, or perform any other duty, unless a deacon be present. Priests hold the first place in the churches ; and if any one of them, on any account, were to do that which is contrary to religion and the priestly office, he is brought to a spiritual tribunal ; but if he be accused of theft or drunkenness, or fall into another vice of that sort, he is punished by the *secular* magistrate, as they call him. I saw some drunken priests publicly whipped at Moscow, whose only complaint was, that they were beaten by slaves, and not by a gentleman. A few years ago, one of the prince’s deputies caused a priest, who had been caught in theft, to be strangled, at which the metropolitan was very displeased, and laid the matter before the prince. When the deputy was summoned to the prince, he replied that, according to the ancient custom of the country, a thief who was not a priest was hanged ; and he was sent away unblamed. If a priest complain before a lay judge that he has been struck by a layman (for all kinds of assaults and injuries apply to the secular

law), then the judge, if he happen to learn that the layman was provoked by the priest, or previously injured in any way by him, punishes the priest. Priests are generally maintained from the contributions of people connected with the court, and have some small tenements allotted to them, with fields and meadows, whence they derive their support by their own and their families' industry, like their neighbours. They have very slender offerings. Sometimes the church money is put out at interest at 10 per cent, and they give the interest to the priest, from fear of being compelled to maintain him at their own expense. There are some also who live by the liberality of the princes. Certainly not many parishes are found endowed with estates and possessions, except the bishoprics and some monasteries. No parish or priesthood is conferred on any one but a priest. In every church there is only one altar, and they do not think it right that the service should be performed more than once a-day. A church is very seldom found without a priest, who is bound only to perform the services three times a-week. The metropolitans, bishops, and archbishops constantly abstain from all kinds of meats; but when they invite laymen or priests, at seasons when meat is eaten, they have the prerogative of being permitted to place meat before them at their entertainment; but this is prohibited to abbots and priors."

Herberstein has recorded the *Canons* of one John, a metropolitan, which are extremely curious; but no date is assigned to them. Documents of this kind so powerfully illustrate the character of a people and the spirit of an epoch, that those canons are here inserted at length:

"Children may be baptised in a case of necessity without a priest.

"Animals and birds torn by birds or animals may not be eaten; but those who eat them, who celebrate the sacrament with unleavened bread, or who eat meat during Septuagesima, or consume the blood of animals, shall be corrected.

“ Birds and animals that have been strangled may not be eaten.

“ The Russians may, in case of necessity, eat with the Romans, but by no means receive the sacrament with them.

“ Russians should convert to the true faith all Romans not rightly baptised (inasmuch as they have not been entirely immersed in water); and when they are converted, the Eucharist is not to be immediately administered to them, any more than to Tatars, or others of a different creed.

“ Old images and pictures which have been consecrated may not be burned, but buried in gardens or some other honourable place, lest they should be injured or disfigured.

“ If you build a house upon a spot that has been consecrated, let the place where the altar stood be left void.

“ If a married man enter a monastery and his wife marry another, let him be consecrated to the priesthood.

“ A prince's daughter shall not be given in marriage to one who receives the communion in unleavened bread or uses unclean meats.

“ Priests should wear, in the winter time, leggings made of the skins of the animals which they have eaten.

“ Those who have not confessed, nor made restitution of the property of another, shall not be admitted to the communion.

“ Priests and monks may not be present at weddings at the time of the dances.

“ If a priest shall knowingly perform the marriage-service for any one wishing to be married the third time, he shall be deprived of his office.

“ When a mother wishes her children to be baptised, and they are unable to fast, she shall fast for them.

“ If a husband leave his first wife and marry a second, or if the wife marry another, he shall not be admitted to the communion until he return into wedlock.

“ Let no one be sold to a strange faith.

“ Any one knowingly eating with the Romans must be purified by prayers of purification.

“ If a priest's wife be taken by the infidels, she should be redeemed, and be taken again into wedlock, because she has suffered violence.

“ Merchants and foreigners going into Roman parts shall not be deprived of the communion, but shall be admitted after making atonement by certain prayers enjoined as a penance.

“ No women shall be admitted to any feast held in a monastery.

“ Marriages may only be contracted publicly in churches.”

According to the usage of the old Russian Church, baptism is performed by the complete immersion of the whole body in water, after which the child is sprinkled with myrrh. The sponsors spit upon the ground every time that they renounce the devil. The priest cuts off some hairs from the child's head, and mixes them with wax, and lays them up in a certain spot in the church. Dr. King, quoting from Simeon of Thessalonica, says: “ The hair is offered by the baptised person to Christ, as a sort of first-fruits, as the sacrifice of his body, the hair being as it were the exhalation of the whole body; the chief priest, therefore, does not carelessly throw it away, but lays it apart in a sacred place.”

Confession forms a part of their creed, but is disregarded by the common people, who, nevertheless, think it obligatory on princes and men of rank. They communicate in both kinds, mixing the bread with the wine. Feast days are numerous. They do not believe in purgatory, but suppose that the dead are transferred to different places, according to their deserts, where they remain till the day of judgment. They do not consecrate cemeteries, saying that the earth itself is consecrated by anointed and consecrated bodies, and not the bodies by the earth.

The worship of saints is peculiar. According to Herberstein, St. Nicolas, bishop of Myra in Lycia, called by him Barenensis, from Bari in Apulia, where he was buried, is the patron saint of Russia. He gives the following account of a miracle: “ They

reverence Nicolas of Bari as first among the saints, and preach daily of his numerous miracles; one of which, which happened a few years ago, I have thought right to relate. One Michael Kysaletski, a large and powerful man, in one of the engagements with the Tatars, pursued a certain renowned Tatar, who fled from him; and when he found he could not catch him, however much he spurred his horse, he said, ‘O Saint Nicolas, bring me up with this hound.’ The Tatar hearing this, cried out with affright, ‘O Saint Nicolas, if this man catch me by thy assistance, thou wilt perform no miracle; but if thou rescuest me, who am a stranger to thy faith, from this pursuit, thy renown will be great.’ They say that Michael’s horse immediately stopped, and the Tatar escaped; and that every year of his life afterwards the Tatar made an offering to St. Nicolas of certain measures of honey on account of his rescue, and as many measures to Michael likewise in memory of his delivery, with the addition of a robe of honour made of marten skins.”

The Russian Church recognises prayer to the saints, and the efficacy of their intercession; but, with special exemptions, it forbids graven images in sculpture and paintings. Paintings, however, of the Virgin Mary, copied from the original by St. Luke, which tradition declares to be genuine, and the ancient image of Christ imprinted on the handkerchief of Sancta Veronica, which the Greek Church pronounces to be the true representation of the Saviour, “not produced by the hand of man,” are orthodox objects of adoration. On this subject the difference between the Greek and Latin Church is clearly defined, as the former only admits those paintings which it believes to be of holy or miraculous origin, rejecting all known to be the products of human art. In 1669, the Czar Alexis announced by a ukase, “that the sacred images of God were, according to the tradition of the holy fathers, under the inspiration of God, and these were accepted according to the invariable usages of the holy Greek Church.” However, this early strictness is not now observed, for the works of human

hands have been introduced, so far as they are faithful imitations of the ancient models ; but in the less accommodating churches of the Staroverzi none but old images are allowed, and their sectaries condemn all copies as heretical. In 1674, the Patriarch Joachim severely denounced these innovations, fearing that they might lead to serious abuses. He interdicted “the printing the countenances of the saints on paper, and the sale of such as were imported from Germany ; for,” he observes, “many make these images in a perverse fashion ; the Lutherans and Calvinists represent them with the features of persons now living in their own country and in German costume, instead of representing them according to the antique models which exist in the orthodox churches.” Kosegarten states, that the village of Kholoui, in the government of Vladimir, is specially devoted to the manufacture of orthodox images, which is the exclusive occupation of its 900 inhabitants ; and Haxthausen observes, that these artificers possess approved models of the separate parts of the human countenance, as the eyes, nose, mouth, chin, so that if an image is accidentally injured, the defaced or broken part is readily restored. These images, he says, are sold all over Russia, and even beyond its limits, in oriental and Slavonic countries ; and Haxthausen has seen them in the hands of the Croats on the military frontiers of Austria. As they are considered sacred, they are not said to be *sold*, like merchandise, but *exchanged*.

“That the Russians can only reduce heaven by famine,” is an old saying, and hence the frequency of the fasts ordained by the Church. At Lent, seven weeks of abstinence are enjoined ; the same from the first week after the Pentecost to St. John the Baptist ; fourteen days before the Assumption, and forty days before Christmas. During these periods not only is animal food strictly prohibited, but also sexual intercourse ; but, it may be presumed, that these rigid rules are “more honoured in the breach than in the observance.”

The Staroverzi, or schismatics of Russia, are numerous, espe-

cially among the Cossacks. They rigidly adhere to the most ancient forms and ceremonies, rejecting all change. They sprang into existence about the year 1589, when the Russian patriarchate was established by the czar, making the Russian Church spiritually independent of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Their position is precisely the reverse of that of the Protestant Reformers who adopted the doctrines of Luther and Calvin; these seceded from the religion of their fathers, whereas the Staroverzi refused the improvements or innovations of their own clergy, strictly adhering in all points to the traditional Christianity they had received from their ancestors. It is of importance to notice this distinction, as some writers have spoken of the Staroverzi as reformers. Their churches are remarkable for simplicity, and their images are strictly orthodox, none being admitted unless truly copied from the antique models.

Among the ceremonies performed at Easter, is one peculiar to the Russian Church; and it has been described as the most striking and imposing spectacle ever invented by the votaries of religion. It was witnessed by Mr. James, the Russian traveller, and we shall transfer his account of it to these pages:—

“ A representation of the sacred tomb is exposed to the people during the whole of the evening; and at night the Resurrection is made the subject of formal annunciation in all the churches throughout the empire. In order to witness this extraordinary sight, we entered the Casan church at a late hour; the nave, the aisles, in short every part, was crowded to suffocation with a host of devotees; thousands of lighted tapers (for each bore one in his hand) glittered over the whole area, spreading an illumination as bright as noon. As the hour of twelve approached, all eyes were earnestly bent on the sanctuary, and a dead silence reigned throughout; at length the door opened, when there issued forth a long train of banners, crosses, &c., with archimandrites, protopopes, and priests of all ranks, dressed in their sumptuous robes of embroidered silk, covered with gold, and silver, and

jewels ; they moved slowly through the crowd, and went out from the doors of the church, as if to search for the body of our Lord ; in a few minutes the insignia were seen again, on their return, floating above the heads of the mob along the nave ; and when the archbishop had regained the altar, he pronounced with a loud voice, *Christos volseress*, "Christ is risen." At that instant the hymn of praise commenced, and a peal of ordnance from the fortress re-echoed the joyful tidings through the city. The world of moujiks now saluted and congratulated one another in turn, for the days of fasting were at an end ; tables spread with provisions in a short time made their appearance in the church ; the forbidden meats were tasted with eager appetites, and a feast of gluttony, that annually proves fatal to some of the followers of this religion, took place of penance and prayer."*

In the Russian churches there is perfect equality. The peasant-serf, who trembles before the presence of a general officer in any other place, feels himself his equal in a church, and does not hesitate to sit down or stand in front of him. Indeed, in all religious edifices the peasants occupy the first rows, and people of distinction are ranged behind them. Haxthausen relates, that during a solemn festival at Moscow, a gentleman of rank pushed forward among the crowd to gain an advanced position. He was attended by a German servant, who spoke the Russian lan-

* Mr. James says that a second carnival of one week succeeded that day, and its close was curious : "The presentation of an egg, in sign of the termination of this fast, is the usual compliment of the season among the people of all ranks, high and low ; the handsomest are made of porcelain, and it is a gift generally made to the fair sex. The lady in complaisance grants the donor permission to kiss her hand, which, on his rising, is returned, according to the graceful mode of Russian salutation, on the gentleman's cheek. By old established custom, no lady of any rank whatsoever can refuse the salute to the meanest person in the street that does but make her the offer of an egg." *Journal of a Tour in Germany, Sweden, Russia, and Poland, during the years 1813 and 1814*, by J. T. James, Esq., Student of Christ Church, Oxford.

guage fluently. The domestic thus addressed a peasant who barred the passage : " Do you not see the general, who desires to get in front of you ?" The peasant quietly answered : " Brother, here we are all equal, because we are in the presence of God."

Peter the Great subverted the ancient ecclesiastical constitution of Russia. In the year 1700, the Patriarch Adrian died ; and, instead of filling up the vacancy, the emperor confided the duties of the patriarchate to an ecclesiastical college, which he established under the style and title of the Holy Synod. The ukase by which this new system was established contains the following passages : " A spiritual authority represented by a college can never excite so much agitation and effervescence in a country as a personal chief of an ecclesiastical order. The common people cannot distinguish between a spiritual and temporal authority. When they witness the extraordinary honours by which a supreme pontiff is surrounded, they are so led away by astonishment and admiration, as to believe that the head of the Church is another sovereign, equal or superior in dignity to the monarch of the kingdom. They are apt, further, to believe that the ecclesiastical order forms a sort of monarchy preferable to the temporal monarchy. As it is incontestable that the common people reason in this manner, what might happen, were the unjust polemics of an ambitious clergy to add fuel to such a flame ?" This ukase was dated in 1721 ; from which period Peter became supreme in Church and State. There is much truth in what has been cited. The patriarchs had greatly extended their power ; and had a Thomas à Beckett arisen in Russia under the reign of a feeble prince, the usurpations of the Church, among so ignorant a people, might have been extremely dangerous to the prerogative. The patriarchs had, indeed, advanced far towards supremacy ; for it was the custom on Palm Sunday, when a solemn procession took place, for the czar to walk on foot, while the patriarch rode ; and the czar was even obliged to lead the horse of the spiritual cavalier by the bridle. Can it be a question

whether, at least on that day, the patriarch was not greater than the sovereign in the eyes of the populace ?

Peter the Great, arbitrary, autocratic, and jealous of the slightest approach to rivalry with his prerogative, removed with a strong hand whatever threatened to weaken, divide, or compromise his exclusive power ; nevertheless, the czar is not the head of the Russo-Greek Church, in the same sense as the Pope is head of the Latin Church. He does not ordain the priesthood ; priests are ordained by the bishops, who are themselves consecrated by the other bishops, with the assistance, or in the presence of, the dean of the synod or of the metropolitan. Neither does the emperor take upon himself to decide on disputed points of theology. Should a new heresy arise in Russia, the synod would be charged with its examination, and might, if it so pleased, consult the four other patriarchs of the East, or convene a general council. Whatever sentence they pronounced, the czar would carry into execution : this being his relation to spiritualities, he is never styled, in official documents, the “ head of the Church,” but the “ protector of the Church.” Nevertheless, he is in all other respects supreme. He appoints to all offices in the Church ; and although he permits the synod and the bishops to present candidates for his approbation, this is merely an act of politic courtesy on his part ; for he can refuse the parties recommended, and remove, of his own will and pleasure, any incumbent, whatever his position. In fact, the Holy Synod is no more than a pliant tool. At the present time, General Protosoff, a cavalry officer, is actually the ruler of this ecclesiastical body, which consists of five members.

Peter the Great suppressed the monasteries, and transferred the management of their property to an economical college, whose members only allowed the monks what was strictly necessary for their maintenance. Afterwards this monastic administration was vested in the synod. Catherine II. appropriated the bulk of monastic property to the public treasury. Monasteries now re-

ceive salaries from the state ; but nunneries are chiefly supported by private alms and the industry of the nuns, though some few are paid by the government. They are not allowed to receive any bequest of real property, without the express sanction of the government. Bishops are always taken from priests resident in monasteries ; and most bishops live in convents. In old times, pious people made pilgrimages to these institutions, and public fairs were established in their neighbourhood ; and these gave rise to many villages. Schools were unknown ; but the Emperor Nicholas has founded some, scattered over the governments of Petersburg, Kief, Moscow, and Kazan ; but they are utterly inadequate to the grand object of national education. The nobility oppose them on principle ; for they dread the enlightenment of the peasants and serfs.*

The Russian clergy are the spiritual police of the czar. On him they are absolutely dependent, and are his tools. The circulation of the Bible was prohibited in 1826 ; and in a country of slaves, the priests dare not tell their congregations that the human race are of one blood and one flesh. The proper cure of

* The catechism used in the Polish provinces speaks of the homage paid to the emperor. It says, "People must submit to the decrees of his justice, according to the example of Christ, who died upon the cross." On this point the Abbé de la Mennais exclaimed : "It has been given to this man Nicholas to enlarge the limits of blasphemy." The following are extracts taken from the new catechism prepared for the use of schools and churches in the Polish provinces of Russia, literally translated :

Q. 1. How is the authority of the emperor to be considered in reference to the spirit of Christianity ?

A. As proceeding immediately from God.

Q. 17. What are the supernaturally revealed motives for this worship (of the emperor) ?

A. The supernaturally revealed motives are, that the emperor is the vicegerent and minister of God to execute the Divine commands, and consequently disobedience to the emperor is identified with disobedience to God himself ; that God will reward us in the world to come for the worship and obedience we render the emperor, and punish us severely to all eternity should we disobey or neglect to worship him. Moreover, God com-

souls, as we see it established in other nations of Europe, is impracticable in Russia. It frequently, and indeed generally, happens, that there is but one church on the estates of a boyar, or noble proprietor ; and that estate may be as large as an English county. This estate may contain several villages, separated by enormous distances and execrable roads ; so that the pastor cannot go to his flock, nor can the flock go to their pastor. The priest lives near to his church, and the church is close to the house of the owner of the land. When the peasants do attend, they have often to travel seven or eight leagues over morasses and swamps, or through snow reaching to their girdles ; and many perish on the journey. But in Russia human life is held in little value. With some rare exceptions, the Russian clergy are grossly ignorant and depraved in morals, addicted to drunkenness and gluttony. They have no real, but only a nominal mission. They are called to preach obedience to the czar, rather than obedience to Christ. Their chief duties are to baptise, to marry, and bury the dead, and to say as little as possible about the truths and promises of Christianity. Though the Bible is prohibited, the Gospels may be used ; but they are translated for the special edification of the Russians, and, of course, sadly mutilated. The catechism for children teaches them to love the czar before God ; and denounces it as a crime to love any one but the czar. Prayers are confined to the Pater and Credo ; the formula runs thus : “ I believe in God in heaven, and in the czar on earth.” If a peasant were detected in reading a stray Bible, he would be flogged and banished to the mines of Siberia.

The clergy are not paid by the State, and have no property

mands us to love and obey, from the inmost recesses of the heart, every authority, and particularly the emperor, not from worldly consideration, but from apprehensions of the final judgment.

Such is a specimen of the teachings promulgated by the Holy Synod, presided over by a general of cavalry, and sanctioned by an emperor who is always parading his piety in diplomatic notes and protocols addressed to foreign governments.

belonging to the Church. They subsist on the voluntary principle. In the villages they are dependent on the peasants, in the towns on the merchants and boyars. After the festival of Easter, each priest blesses all the houses in his parish, from the basement to the attic, the ceremony being performed in each room; stables, barns, warehouses, shops, factories, all receive this benediction. He then receives what is offered: these annual gifts, with fees for baptism, marriage, burial, confession, and absolution, constitute the revenue of the priest. It is impossible to place an ecclesiastical order in a more degrading position.

Among the various races and peoples of which the Russian empire is composed, uniformity of creed cannot be expected, nor does it exist. Those descended from the nomadic tribes, as the Tatars, Mongols, and inhabitants of the Crimea, are still attached to Islamism. The Courlanders, Livonians, Esthonians, and Finlanders, profess Lutheranism. In Georgia and Poland the doctrines of the Latin Church are dominant. Jews are not allowed to live in St. Petersburg or Moscow. Poles are not permitted to enter the administrative service, unless they become members of the Greek Church, or at least bind themselves to bring up their children in that creed. Russia affects the principle of toleration; but restrains it at the caprice of the reigning czar. Thus, in the reign of Anne, when Prince Galitzin became a convert to the Latin Church, the punishment inflicted on him was truly atrocious. He was compelled to marry a woman of the lowest extraction, and his espousals were celebrated with burlesque pomp. "The bride and bridegroom," says Mr. James, "were carried in a cage of iron on the back of an elephant, followed by a procession of rustics, two by two, habited in the costumes of the various nations of Siberia. On their arrival at the place of destination, they were re-conducted to a sumptuous edifice of ice, adorned with columns, and porticoes, and domes. A salute of ordinance was fired from pieces made of the same substance; while every article of furniture, even to the nuptial couch

on which they were constrained to pass the night, was framed of this cold material."

Mr. James also refers to the translation into Russian of one of the philosophical works of Ancillon by Theophanes, Bishop of Kasan, which was bought up with avidity; it was answered by Philarete, Bishop of Novgorod; and this provoked a violent rejoinder. The government now interposed, and the controversy was silenced by an imperial ukase, which prohibited the sale of Theophanes' work.

In the reign of the Emperor Alexander, a sect of fanatics arose, still known as the "mutilated." To use their own insensate language, they "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." They collected many converts, and some even appeared ostentatiously on the Petersburg Exchange; but the government intervened, menacing all who adopted this practice with the knout. The miserable creatures still exist in many of the great cities of the empire; and it would seem that they are rarely punished; for a recent French traveller, M. Germain de Lagny, states that they are largely congregated at Toula and its neighbourhood. We learn from this writer, that Alexander not only sentenced them to the knout, but to banishment; and it was proposed to exile them to the most northern extremities of Kamtschatka: they prepared themselves readily for the journey, as if seeking the crown of martyrdom; but the government, struck with pity at the dogged fanaticism of these madmen, shut its eyes to their folly, and the law became a dead letter. They were, however, prohibited from making proselytes. The Emperor Nicholas has knouted and whipped all detected in performing the operation on children or adults. These sectaries follow the single trade of money-changers; and M. de Lagny affirms that all the money-changers of Petersburg, Moscow, Novgorod, Kief, Odessa, and Kasan are mutilated. The expression of their countenances is sad; their quivering voice and lack-lustre eyes betray their degraded condition.

There is another sect called Martinists, who are the followers of Emanuel Swedenborg, Jacob Boehmen, and other mystical writers, who pass in the eyes of their disciples for prophets. These people study books on magic and the occult sciences ; but their numbers are few, and their follies being as harmless as contemptible, government takes no notice of their proceedings.

The Uniates are Greeks reunited to the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore regarded as schismatics by the orthodox Greek Church. They grew up as an ecclesiastical body towards the close of the sixteenth century in the Duchy of Lithuania, at that time incorporated with Poland. These sectaries embraced the doctrines and discipline of the Greek Church, but nevertheless acknowledge the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. This *Union*, for by that title it is known, was rigorously supported by the Polish government. The Jesuits upheld it in their schools, in the hope that, the recognition of Roman supremacy being settled, the Uniates might in time abandon the Greek ritual. Hence arose the schism between the Orthodox and the Uniate. In the course of time many of the Orthodox seceded and joined the Uniates ; but when Catherine II. got possession of Poland, she interposed her authority, interdicting the conversion of her new subjects to the Union or to the Roman Catholic faith. She also offered her protection to such of the Uniates as chose to enter the orthodox Russo-Greek Church. However, 2,000,000 are supposed to have remained faithful to their creed, which indeed had lost much of its primitive character, and approximated more and more to the ceremonies of Rome. In 1828, the Emperor Nicholas published an ukase on this controversy, which ordered, “ that, for the Greco-Uniate churches in Russia, there should be established, under the presidency of their metropolitan, Josaphat Bulgak, a separate Greco-Uniate college, which, having jurisdiction over all the affairs of the Church, should be obliged carefully to guard its institutions, the rites of divine service, and all the orders of Church government, from the in-

fluence of any kind of strange innovation contrary to the spirit of the Greek ceremonies, on the precise basis of the decree of 1595, which laid down the principles of the Union." The main object of this ukase was to avert the intrusive influence of the Church of Rome.

On the 12th February, 1839, the Greco-Uniate bishops in Russia assembled at Polotsk, framed a document which set forth the actual condition of their Church, and then addressed a petition to the emperor, which received 1300 signatures. This petition traced the history of the Union from its formation in Lithuania in the sixteenth century, and bitterly condemned the efforts of the Polish government and of the Church of Rome to separate them from the orthodox Catholic Eastern Church and to unite them to the Western. It then stated, that after the incorporation of Poland with Russia many of the Uniates were reconciled to the ancestral Greco-Russian Church, those who still stood apart being allured by the intrigues, or alarmed by the threats of the Roman Catholic priesthood and Jesuits. The next clauses express the conviction of the subscribers that the Greco-Uniate Church can never acquire sufficient stability in its separate and detached form; and after expressing their firm belief, on mature inquiry and reflection, in the truth of the sacred apostolic doctrines of the orthodox Catholic Eastern Church, the petitioners pray that they may be incorporated with the orthodox Church, the Church of all the Russias. To this the Emperor Nicholas consented, and it is generally believed that he secretly commanded this movement. As a matter of form, he ordered Count Protasoff, the military president of the Holy Synod, to submit the petition to that body, who reported of course in its favour; and on the 25th March, 1839, the emperor signed the necessary documents in these words, "I thank God and accept." Thus was established the fusion between the Uniates and the Orthodox.

Such is the Russian account of this transaction; but the Polish statement is of a very different character. Pope Gre-

gory XVI. had been persuaded by the Emperor Nicholas to denounce the revolution of 1830, and to exhort the Polish clergy to preach submission to their flocks, declaring that the czar had promised at all times to protect the Roman Catholic religion. Colonel Szyzma, a Pole, who had been educated at Oxford, and had professed English literature at the University of Warsaw, has told Europe how that promise was fulfilled, after the czar had won over the Polish bishops to his policy.

“ They had finished,” says the writer, “ by signing an Act of Union on the 12th February, 1839, for themselves and for the diocese intrusted to their care. At once 13,000 priests (contained in them) were forced to abjure Roman Catholicism, and conform to the new ritual presented to them by the bishops. In most of the parishes a strong opposition was offered by the clergy, but all in vain; the recusant priests were expelled their parishes, and deprived of their livings; many were sent off to schismatic monasteries, and there incarcerated with no food but bread and water; some had even that denied to them, but remained in cold, damp dungeons, with starvation or death staring them in the face. Aged venerable deans and canons were clad in clothes worn by menials, and obliged to do the lowest work of servants, and to eat with them at the same table. Many were thus brought to the threshold of death, and wished for death; but no consolation of religion was allowed them. Through the walls of their dungeons they confessed to each other, imparting religious comfort and blessings; but when detected at this work of their faith, they were severely punished—commonly flogged and severely lacerated. Among these tortures, an aged abbot of eighty expired, and a venerable dean of seventy-one years died of sorrow and affliction. Up to the 6th of January one hundred and seventy of their clergy had fallen victims to this cruel and inhuman treatment. The younger portion, who would not turn schismatics, had their heads shaved, and were sent as recruits to the Caucasian army. Trynkouski, the celebrated preacher, lost

his senses, in consequence of the atrocious treatment he experienced at the hands of the governor of Wilna. Another, the Dean Onacewick, persevered unaltered in his faith, unshaken either by the threats of Mouravief, governor of Grodno, or the penalties inflicted on him by his superiors; and amid these feelings his end approached; from his deathbed he cited the apostates and his tormentors to appear before the judgment-seat of God."

The horrors of the persecution are depicted in frightful colours by a modern anonymous writer, from whose work we shall cite some passages; and they will enable the reader to judge of the religion of "Holy Russia," and the piety of the orthodox Nicholas.

"The Emperor Nicholas, who at the close of the revolution published a free pardon, with certain conditions, to all who should return to their homes within a given time expressing their contrition, by a letter dated the 6th April, 1832, instructed the governor of Podolia to transport into Russia those who, trusting to his promise, had submitted. But though so merciless to those whom he had ranked in the class of most venial political offenders, and had allured into his power by solemn assurances of forgiveness, he offered, by an ukase of the 2d January, 1839, an absolute pardon to all Roman Catholics condemned for murder or theft to capital punishments, on condition of embracing the Greek faith. The peasantry were promised their freedom on the condition of apostasy; and a period of famine was taken advantage of to offer them flour on condition of their making three crosses on a register, to acknowledge its receipt. This register contained a general recantation, to which their mark was thus surreptitiously obtained; but as, after this, they were, by the terms of the ukase, considered as belonging to the Russo-Greek Church, from which any departure is capitally punished, they were thus utterly at the mercy of the authorities. In some places whole villages were driven into baths and ruins, where

they were smoked by lighted straw till they yielded. In one place, some hundreds of the peasantry having obstinately taken refuge on a frozen pond, the soldiers accompanying the Russian missions were directed to break the ice, and the unyielding wretches perished wholesale."

The same writer quotes an ukase of the 20th March, 1840, which was directed against apostates. It enacted that, besides the punishment already provided by law, "their real and all other property shall be confiscated; they cannot employ any orthodox peasantry, nor sojourn where orthodox people live. Their children shall be taken from them and brought up in the orthodox Church. The crime of apostasy shall not be confined to a moment, nor is it transitory, but permanent and continuous, until the apostate shall have returned to the orthodox Church. To celebrate the incorporation of the united Greeks with the orthodox Church, a medal was struck with this inscription: 'Separated by violence in 1596, reunited by love in 1839.'"*

The persecution of the nuns of Minsk is another proof of Russian barbarism and imperial hypocrisy.

"To sum up the facts briefly: between the years 1837 and 1845 forty-four nuns perished at the hands of the Russian authorities out of fifty-eight, devoted to duties whose fulfilment appeals so directly to all human sympathies, that a religious sisterhood analogous to their own had been spared even during the Reign of Terror, which so pitilessly swept away all other social landmarks. Of the fourteen who remained, eight had either their eyes torn out or their limbs broken; and out of the other six, only four had strength to attempt, or fortune to effect, their escape. A few more months, and the whole surviving fourteen, at last doomed to Siberia, might have been expiring on that weary road which the ten unhappy creatures left behind by the fugitives are at this moment (1846) being dragged or driven over, all lamed, blind, or ailing." In another passage the same writer says: "The whole

* Eastern Europe and the Emperor Nicholas.

of these women—fifty-seven—were now brought up twice a week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, before a commission of the Russian authorities and clergy, and flogged before them, receiving fifty strokes a-piece. This was continued for months together, till the wounds upon their backs were an open sore, and pieces of the scabs, and then of the raw flesh, adhered to the instruments of torture. Three of their number died beneath this infliction. They were then fed on salt herrings, and refused drink (a favourite Russian mode of torture), except on the condition of apostasy. This punishment, which it appears they found most difficult to bear, was superseded by a system of starvation. They were only fed once every other day, and driven to eat nettles and the fodder of the convent cattle. They were employed to dig out clay; and not understanding how to conduct an excavation, the earth fell in, and buried five of their number. With incredible barbarity, the Russian authorities not only refused to dig them out, but prevented the nuns from attempting to extricate their companions. They perished in this self-dug grave. Some of the Polish gentry, whose spirit no terrors will quell, coming to look on, one of their number addressed some words of consolation to these poor women. Within twenty-four hours, not only this imprudent individual, but all those who surrounded him, had disappeared. The falling of a wall in the midst of the nuns injured many, and killed eight of them outright. A ninth and tenth soon after perished. About this period several monks of Saint Basilius were brought to the same convent. Their treatment is described as having been more barbarous than even that of the nuns. Four of these men, Zawechi, Komar, Zilewicz, and Buckzynski by name, all of them being upwards of seventy years of age, were at last, in the full severity of winter, stripped and placed under a pump, where, as the water flowed over them, it gradually congealed into a mass of ice, and froze them to death; another, named the Abbé Laudanski, aged and infirm, while staggering beneath a load of firewood, was struck upon the head with such violence by a

drunken deacon, that his skull was fractured, and he died upon the spot."

We must extract one other passage; and, as the author well observes, it relates to a scene "of such diabolical malignity as only the most undeniable evidence can render credible."

"When the Russian soldiers and the newly-made deacons had been rendered drunk with brandy, all these helpless nuns were turned out amongst them as incurably obstinate, to treat as they thought fit. Then commenced a scene worthy of Pandemonium—the shrieks and prayers of the victims mingling with the oaths, blasphemies, and ribaldry of the crowd to whose brutal lust they were abandoned. When the fury of these demons in human form had been exhausted, it was discovered that two of those unfortunate females were quite dead. The skull of one had been crushed by the stamping on the temples of an iron-plated heel. The other was trampled into such a mass of mud and gore, that even its human character was scarce recognisable. Eight others had one or several bones or limbs broken, or their eyes torn or trodden out. Of the whole number, the superior, a woman of iron frame and indomitable resolution, fared the best; but she was not allowed to attend or console her mutilated sisters, except on the condition of apostasy. They were afterwards marched out of Polock by night, and chained two to two,—even those whose eyes had been torn out and whose wounds were festering. Those whose legs were broken, or who were lamed, were sent forward in carts, under the care of Cossacks. A gentleman of Polock, M. Walenkiowitch, having ordered a funeral service to be read for these victims, was seized in the middle of the night and sent to Siberia, his property being confiscated. On reaching Medzioly, the nuns were again immured in a convent of the black sisterhood, and divided into four parties. Here they were put into sacks, and towed after boats in the water, which was allowed to rise to their mouth and nose. Three more of their number perished in this manner, either of cold or fear, or were drowned by incessant

immersion. The inhabitants of Medzioly carried off their bodies in the night, as the earthly coil of holy martyrs, which men would some day venerate and hold precious. After two more years' captivity, of the fifty-eight nuns (thirty-four from Minsk, fourteen from Vitepsk, and ten from Polock) only fourteen survived, and of these eight were lame, maimed, or blinded. The superior, Irena Mieceslas, who had fared the best, had an open wound, from which she was obliged to extract with her fingers the carious bones, which afterwards becoming filled with worms, from want of dressing, caused her intense agony."*

These details are harrowing to record ; but history loses its instructive character when facts are suppressed or diluted. Some of the German parasites of Russia, the recipients of pensions and golden snuff-boxes encircled with diamonds, have pretended that the mission of Russia is to christianise the Orient ; but is it with hands reeking with the blood of Polish martyrs that she is to plant the cross in Turkey or Persia ? Not less brutal than Philip the Second of Spain is the Emperor Nicholas ; nor is the sacred college of St. Petersburg less execrable than the Inquisition. If the tree is to be judged of by the fruit it bears, the doctrines of Islamism are holier than those of the Russo-Greek Church. If Mahometans, in the frenzies of fanaticism, have slaughtered those whom they deem infidels, their government has not coolly issued mandates for inflicting continuous and varied tortures on recusants, nor abandoned women to rape to ensure their conversion to orthodoxy. Were diplomacy based on virtue, Russia would be placed without the pale of nations, and no Christian people would hold friendly relations with an imperial monster, whose life is past in outraging humanity and blaspheming heaven.

The Emperors of Russia have not only made use of the Church to secure the passive obedience of the serfs, but to strengthen their policy of territorial aggrandisement. Under the hypocritical pretences of religion, they have constantly interfered in the affairs of

* Eastern Europe, 279 *et seq.*

Greece and Turkey, pretending to be the protectors of Christianity against Islamism, while their sole object has been conquest. The credulity must indeed be great which attributes an excess of piety to the rulers of millions of serfs, who scourge with the knout, and convert Siberia into the tomb of the living. Those who distinguish between facts and assertions may readily be satisfied that the original Greek Church is under no obligation to the Church of Russia or to its emperors, and that the patriarchs of Constantinople are indebted for their prolonged existence, not to the Muscovites, but to the Turks.

The Russians continued to be tributary to the Tatars for more than two centuries, and only emancipated themselves from the yoke during a part of the reign of Ivan III., who ascended the ducal throne of Muscovy in 1462; and it has been stated that their conquerors left them perfectly free to follow their own religion. Now in 1453, or nine years before Ivan liberated his country from foreign domination, Mahommed II. took Constantinople by assault on the 29th of May. On the 1st of June he declared himself the protector of the Christians, who, without his humane intervention, would have become the slaves of their conquerors, according to the usages of war which then prevailed. He invited all who had fled during the siege to return to their homes, guaranteeing to them safety, liberty, and the free exercise of their religion. At this crisis the Patriarch of Constantinople was dead. Mahommed ordered a new election, in which all the forms and ceremonies of the Byzantine Church should be observed. Accordingly the assembled clergy and laity elected George Scholarius, also called Genadius, with the same rites as had been observed before the conquest. The patriarchs had received their investiture from the emperors, and Genadius received his from the hands of the sultan. Mahommed invited the patriarch to a sumptuous banquet, and honoured him by a magnificent reception. When he was about to depart, the sultan delivered into his hands the jewelled crosier, the symbol of his ecclesiastical office, and said,

“Be thou patriarch, and may heaven protect you! Rely upon my friendship in all circumstances, and enjoy all the rights and all the privileges enjoyed by your predecessors.” The sultan then conducted the patriarch to the gate of the palace, caused him to be mounted on a richly caparisoned horse, which was presented to him, and directed the viziers and pashas who were in attendance to conduct him to the synod, and thence to the place allotted for his residence. The churches of Constantinople were divided between the Christians and the Mahomedans, and the limits assigned to the two classes of the population distinctly marked. In this manner, just about 400 years ago, was the Greek Church placed under the special protection of the sultans, and so it has remained.

Mahommed preserved the patriarchate in Turkey; Peter the Great abolished it in Russia. Mahommed preserved intact the spiritualities of the Greek Church; Peter the Great usurped them, creating himself supreme pontiff. The Russian Church is schismatic in relation to the Greek Church; and its regard for the Holy Places means neither more nor less than the military occupation of Constantinople. The czars parade their mock piety before the world to conceal their real ambition.

The differences which arose in 1853 between Russia and the Western Powers were thus commented upon by Count Nesselrode in his note of the 20th (8th) June:—“It seems to be unknown, or left out of view, that Russia at present virtually enjoys, by position and treaty, an *ancient* right of watching over the effectual protection of its religion in the East; and the maintenance of this ancient right, which it will not abandon, is represented as implying the new pretensions of a protectorate, at once religious and political, the bearing and consequences of which, for the future, are greatly exaggerated. It is to this misunderstanding that the crisis of the moment is due. The tendency and consequences of our pretended new political protectorate have no existence. We only demand for our co-religionists in the East the strict *status quo*—the preservation of the privileges which they have possessed

ab antiquo under the ægis of their sovereign. We will not deny that from this may result, for Russia, what may justly be denominated as religious patronage. This is what we have *always* exercised in the East; but if hitherto the independence and sovereignty of Turkey have been able to exist together with this patronage, why should either the one or the other suffer in the future from the moment when our pretensions are reduced to what is at bottom a mere confirmation?"

The words *ancient*, *ab antiquo*, *always*, which appear in Count Nesselrode's document, are here printed in italics, to place in a more vivid light the duplicity of Russia's conduct, and the flagrant mendacity of its diplomatists. The words quoted imply that the czars have exercised a religious patronage in the East from time immemorial, which is absolutely false; indeed, the fact is, that Russia is the last in date of all the European powers to possess even religious *privileges* in Turkey. As to patronage, it has never been conceded or acknowledged, though its usurpation has been frequently attempted.

Russia seeks, by a strained and unwarrantable construction of certain clauses, to base her pretensions on the treaty of Kainarji. Those clauses are subjoined:

"Art. 7. The Sublime Porte promises to protect the Christian religion and the churches belonging to it; and it also permits the ministers of the imperial court of Russia to make, on all occasions, representations, as well in respect to the new church at Constantinople as to those which belong to it, promising to take them into consideration, as coming from a person in the confidence of a neighbouring and sincerely friendly power.

"Art. 8. It will be permitted to the subjects of the Russian empire to visit the city of Jerusalem and the holy places; and there shall not be exacted from them, neither at Jerusalem nor elsewhere, any contributions, duty, or other imposition.

"Art. 14. After the example of the other powers, it is permitted to the high court of Russia, besides the chapel erected in

the house of the embassy, to construct, in a quarter of Galata named Beg Oglou, a public church of the Greek religion, which shall always be under the protection of the ministers of that empire, and held free from all interruption and annoyance."

Such, then, is the antiquity (not yet of a single century's date) on which rests this plea of religious patronage, which Russia, according to Count Nesselrode, has "always exercised in the East." All that was done in 1774 was to place Russia, for the first time, on an equality with the other powers of Europe; and this is distinctly stated in the first words of the 14th article. Any other interpretation implies both insolence and falsehood. Moreover, it should be remembered that the Russian Church is not identical with the Greek Church, either in its discipline, forms, or ceremonies; so that the pretended sympathies of the czars, who have usurped the ancient patriarchate, have had, and still have, no other source than hypocrisy subservient to ambition. If the Greeks have been in past times the dupes of Russian prevarication, the delusion should now cease, as the Emperor Nicholas declared to Sir Hamilton Seymour, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg in 1853, as proved by the publication of the secret correspondence, that he would never permit the re-establishment of a Byzantine empire.

The ecclesiastical organisation of Russia contains 35,280 cathedral and parochial churches, and 9630 chapels, to which are attached 37,133 priests, 15,817 deacons, and 65,094 sacristans. The monastic clergy, called the Black Clergy, possess 463 convents for men, and 118 for women, containing 5149 monks, and 3963 servitor brethren. There are 2250 nuns, and 5169 servitor sisters.

The following are the principal articles of the Russian code (Swod) relating to the Church:

"Art. 40. The dominant religion in the Russian empire is that of the orthodox and catholic Christian Church, according to the Eastern confession.

"Art. 41. The emperor who fills the throne of all the Russias

can never profess any other religion but that of the orthodox Church.

“Art. 42. The emperor, as a Christian sovereign, is the supreme defender and protector of the dominant religion, and of all the institutions of the holy Church.

“Art. 35. Accession to the throne must be accompanied by the act of consecration, according to the ritual of the Russian Church and of the ancient Greek Catholic Church. Before the ceremony, the emperor must publicly recite his confession of faith.”*

LEGAL REFORM.

The Emperor Nicholas is entitled to unqualified praise for the energy and judgment he has displayed in remodelling the whole system of Muscovite legislation. In this department of government his predecessors, with very few exceptions, had shown little activity or intelligence; and when he ascended the throne, he found Muscovite legislation almost a chaos.

* The barma is a sort of collar of broad form, of coarse silk, beautifully worked on the outside with gold and all kinds of gems. It was taken by Vladimir from a certain Genoese named Capha. The sviatui barmi—that is, holy barmi—was worn by the czars of Russia at their coronation up to the time of Peter the Great. It is now preserved in the imperial museum at Moscow. Various are the accounts given of its first introduction into Russia. Some say, though there is no certainty in the story, that in the year 1114, the Grand-Duke Vladimir ravaged Thrace, and carried off a vast booty. The Emperor Constantine, alarmed at his progress, sent him many valuable presents, and among others the barmi. It appears, however, from printed state documents, that the barmi was certainly known in the fourteenth century. The Grand-Duke John Danielovich Kalita, by his will, in 1328, bequeathed it to his younger sons, John and Andrew. It would seem from the wording of the various bequests of the barmi, that it was attached to the dress, and always kept with it. Antiquaries are at variance as to the origin of the word; some have derived it from the Greek βαρμια, *heaviness*, as implying the burden of a duty and responsibility undertaken by the newly-inaugurated monarch; but this is mere conjecture. HERBERSTEIN, and the note of his *English* editor, R. H. MAJOR.

The municipal law of Novgorod, published by Jaroslaf, is the oldest Russian code; though a common law, founded on usage, preceded that compilation, as Oleg appealed to it in his treaty with the Greek emperors. That common law seems to have been of Slavonian origin. In course of time, by repeal, modification, and amplification, it was adapted to the Russians, under the title of *Pravada*. Vladimir II., Mstislaf, Yaropolk II., and other grand princes, successively promulgated new ordinances or ukases, as the necessities of reform arose, in addition to, or in amendment of, those transmitted from earlier days; and these, incorporated together, formed the *sudebnik*. According to Tooke, this is the code which Ivan II. revised and improved. That historian enumerates five principal causes which necessitated codification under that czar. 1. The original partition of the empire into a number of separate and independent departments. 2. The commixture of the people living on the confines with other national stems. 3. The subsequent conquests of the Tatars, and the long duration of their sovereignty. 4. The changes gradually introduced in the ancient mode of life, in usages and manners. 5. The dormant or confused state of the laws.

After the overthrow of the Tatar dynasty, and when the sceptre was again wielded by one hand over the reunited territory, a new code became indispensable, and what are called “*Uloshenies*” were published. Ivan II. persuaded the metropolitan Makarius to aid him in this useful work. In 1542 the clergy were assembled in a council for the regulation of Church matters, whom the czar addressed in the following terms:—“I have received from you the blessing to enable me to correct the *sudebnik* by the old one; and through you I have corrected the *sudebnik*.” These are admitted to be his own recorded words, whence it is plain that he did not promulgate entirely new laws, but only amended those in existence. The *sudebnik* contained ninety-seven articles, all on civil law. The *Gubnaia Gramota* was the book of criminal law. The *Uloshenies* are lost, as well as a book on penal jurisprudence,

styled Gubnie Starosti. The stoglaf, so called because it contained 100 chapters, was promulgated at Moscow in 1542, and was confined to canons relating to the Church. The grand code of the Czar Alexis Mikailovitch next formed the basis of the positive laws. It was, however, hurriedly framed, being finished in ten weeks, and contained no more than general outlines of the principles of legislation.

In 1700 Peter the Great turned his attention to law reform, and a commission was appointed to prepare an augmented code; but after a lapse of fourteen years no progress was effected, and the emperor determined to borrow new elements of legislation from Sweden; but he died before that scheme was accomplished. His immediate successors either suspended law reform, or failed in the attempt to prosecute it with successful results, till the reign of Catherine, who, in 1767, at a solemn meeting, appointed a commission, which was dissolved in five months without having prepared a single document. Alexander, in 1801, made another effort, and nominated another commission in 1804; but it made no progress worthy of notice.

The Tribonian of Russia was Speranski, son of a Russian clergyman. In early life he was attached to the financial and legislative departments, in which he soon became eminently distinguished. In 1810 he was made a privy councillor, and acted as private secretary to the Emperor Alexander. Despotism is ever suspicious and cruel; and this able legist, without a trial, and without even an accusation, was seized and sent to Siberia, where for many years he worked as a slave. In 1819 the wheel of fortune turned in his favour, and he was appointed governor-general of all Siberia. In 1821 he was recalled to St. Petersburg, but not employed in a prominent department; but on the accession of Nicholas he was reinstated in the high offices he held before his exile.

“Almost every state,” says Speranski, “from the earliest entrance into the career of their present civilisation, received their

share of a rich inheritance—the Roman laws. It is proved that the use of that civilisation never ceased in the west of Europe; but it acquired new strength, and became almost general at the commencement of the sixteenth century; and we must observe, that this treasure was bequeathed to modern nations not in that state of disorder and shapeless mass in which it existed even in Rome, but in its integrity as a body of laws, first from Theodosius, afterwards from Justinian. Providence has bestowed on Russia a different fate. We have received no part of the Roman inheritance. We have been obliged to derive our whole legislation from our national sources, from our customs, traditions, and experience. Civil laws, criminal laws, laws of administration, and of interior police,—every thing had to be created anew, and with our own materials.”

These remarks are of considerable importance in estimating the difficulties which the Russian juriconsults had to encounter. To them “the file afforded no precedent.” They were almost like the pioneers of civilisation in the back-woods of America. They had no compass by which to steer their course. The traditions and customs with which they had to deal were as diverse as the various nations which formed the heterogeneous populations of the empire, and they had to reconcile and harmonise discordant prejudices. It was also a matter of great delicacy to select the members of a commission of inquiry whose duties were not only to reconstruct, but to construct. In the preceding period of 126 years, from the legal reforms of Peter the Great, ten commissions had been appointed, who had effected next to nothing; but what they had proposed was in some degree regarded as precedent. There was no compendium of prior legislation, and no lucid arrangement of the laws, such as they were, in chronological order. Speranski, therefore, had before him a most laborious undertaking; and it is proper to state in his own words what had been effected during the reign of Alexander:

“In 1809 the subjects of the labours of the commission un-

derwent another division, and its composition was at the same time partially changed. In 1810, in consequence of a new organisation of the council of the empire, it was transformed into an institution within its jurisdiction. Its council was abolished, and a director, under whose presidency it was placed, was to lay its labours immediately before the council of the empire. In 1812 this order was again changed. The director was replaced by a council of three members, with their eldest for president, and under the authority of a superior director, which system lasted till 1826. The labours of the commission did not embrace the whole circle that had been sketched out for it ; they were confined to the civil, penal, and commercial codes. In these three parts, between 1804 and 1826, a few general heads were drawn up in the shape of projects, and especially those of the civil code, one of the commercial code, and three of the penal code. The articles of the project of the civil code were, at different intervals, carried for revision before the council of the empire ; but this examination was suspended, the first time on the ground that the third part of the project was not completed ; the second time, in 1815, the council found that it was impossible to proceed to the revision of the new code without having determined the existing legislation by a complete and systematic body of laws. The third time, in the course of the years 1821 and 1822, all that the commission presented was revised, but a great many articles were sent back to be corrected and remodelled."

Within six weeks after the accession of the Emperor Nicholas to the throne, he announced his determination to become a law reformer in the following terms addressed to Prince Lapoukin, President of the Imperial Council :—" At the very first review of the different parts of the administration of the state, directing public attention to the code of the laws of the country, I perceived that the labours undertaken with reference to that part have for many years past been repeatedly interrupted ; and that therefore, up to the present time, they have not attained their object. Being

desirous, as much as possible, of further insuring their successful accomplishment, I have recognised the necessity of taking them into my immediate jurisdiction ; for which purpose I have ordered a particular section to be established for them in my privy chancery."

This was a noble commencement of a new reign ; and it is to the honour of Nicholas, that, amidst all his schemes for extending the territorial limits of his empire, he never paused till he completed his arduous and useful work. The state of the laws was disgraceful, and their administration marked by the grossest venality ; while the corruption of the judges was screened from detection by the obscurity and contradictory character of the ukases and statutes. Ustrialoff, professor of modern history in the University of St. Petersburg, who wields a most courtly pen, and reverences the Emperor Nicholas as a demigod, has ventured to describe the system in the following terms :—" There certainly existed a radical principle, that every pre-existing law should be annulled by a succeeding one, published under the same circumstances, and on the same subject ; yet it not unfrequently happened, that although the subject-matter of the old law was abolished, the details originating it had a peculiar form of their own, in manifest opposition to the new. Independently of this,—not to allude to any person in particular—the judges themselves often ~~knew~~ not, and could not know, which of the old laws were superseded by the new, and that for a very natural reason ; not only was there no kind of compendium, there was not even a satisfactory collection of the laws in chronological order. Even the commissioners occupied with examining them, and forming a compendium out of them, had but succinct and incomplete registers. The laws were preserved in the archives of the tribunals, and, *according to the intentions of the judges, were either brought to light or deservedly overlooked.* . . . Thus our legislation, in spite of its good principles, presented a confused mass, where the mind of the most experienced jurist was lost as in a maze, where *chicanery*,

cupidity, and imposture were sure of protection and an abundant harvest; the innocent were ruined, and the most barefaced villany triumphed."

Before Speranski commenced his labours, he applied to the Emperor Nicholas to decide which of two courses he was to pursue, pointing out that he could either compose a digest out of the native laws, which was the primary idea of Peter the Great, correcting them by the lights of experience, or construct an entirely new code. The former plan was adopted; and in 1830 forty-five volumes were printed, ranging from the grand code of Alexis to the death of the Emperor Alexander, a period of 176 years. This first digest contained 30,000 articles. From 1825 to the end of 1832, a second collection was made and printed; and on the 31st of January, 1833, the following manifesto appeared:—"All the laws, beginning with the code of 1649, to the 1st of January, 1832, through the multiform changes of time—having preserved till now their force and activity—being now classified and separated from all that, by the force of succeeding decrees, have been annulled,—all, with the exception of a few particular ordinances, reduced to a uniform composition, are united into a whole, and distributed in books according to the principal subjects of administration and judicial business. All that, since the 1st of January, 1832, have been enacted, or, from the general progress of legislation may hereafter emanate, shall, according to the order of those books, and with reference to their classification, be distributed in the yearly continuation; and thus the composition of the laws, once arranged, shall be for ever preserved in its fulness and unity."

So far a grand work was accomplished; but of course imperfections remained. There was fulness in the reform, but condensation was desirable, and to that subject the emperor now turned his attention. Speranski pointed out that either a revision might take place of the separate and independent parts, or systematically of the whole that had been brought under view. The emperor determined on the latter course; and on the 12th of

February, 1833, the following imperial manifesto was published:—

“ We had prescribed, before every thing else, to get together all the laws, and publish a complete collection of them; and we stated our will, that from that collection should be extracted all the laws now in force in our empire, to be united into a uniform and regular body of laws, without in any way changing their spirit, by following punctually for this work the basis traced as early as the year 1700 by Peter the Great.”

Speranski died before he could continue the amendments proposed; and the task committed to him was transferred to Count Bludoff, who prosecuted legal and judiciary reform with energy and judgment. On the 15th of August, 1845, he completed the codes of criminal and correctional laws. Schnitzler has given the following summary of these transactions:

“ The first publication of the *Swod*, at the end of 1832, was composed of fifteen quarto volumes, printed in double columns, and embracing eight books of codes, 36,000 articles, or 42,198 if the additions be included, are arranged therein in 1,499 chapters, and a very detailed table, in alphabetical order, serves as a key and catalogue. These eight codes are as follow:—1. Organic statutes, in three volumes, containing the fundamental laws of the empire, as also the regulations on the organisation of the administration and judiciary order. 2. Regulations on recruiting, statute labour, &c., in one volume. 3. Regulations on the finances, divers imposts, customs' duties, currency, mines, salt-pits, forests, &c., in four volumes. 4. Codes of conditions,—that is to say, of classes of the population, or laws on the state of persons, in one volume. 5. Civil laws, including those of the boundaries of properties, in one volume. 6. Regulations of public economy,—credit, commerce, industry, means of communication, administration of towns and villages, fairs, &c., in two volumes. 7. Regulations of interior police, in two volumes. 8. Penal laws, with the laws on criminal procedure. This last code has,

since 1832, undergone a very sensible modification. A complete criminal and correctional penal code, accompanied with a detailed list of regulations on the mode of transporting into Siberia, has been promulgated by a ukase of the 27th of August, 1845. Forming a new volume in the *Digest*, it supersedes the whole of the first book in the fifteenth, and came into force on the 1st of May, 1846. By establishing a rather less barbarous, and, especially, a less undefined penalty, the positive inflictions of which moreover it is now possible for every body to know, it will be of invaluable benefit to the Russian nation. Since 1832, the general codification has considerably exceeded the limits of the fifteen volumes of the first publication. Since then five others have expounded the laws concerning worship and public instruction; and the military code, completed in 1839, has been in force from the 1st of January, 1840. Moreover, a ukase of the 13th of July, 1845, having decided that the provisional and local laws of the three Baltic governments (Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland) should be united in a particular digest, arranged according to the model of the *Swod* of the general laws, two volumes more were published in the same year, and they have been in force from the 1st of January, 1846. Every other addition has lost its official character; for quotations and applications must henceforth be made according to the number of the volumes and the chapters added in the printed code.

“ The judiciary organisation comprises eleven courts of justice of different degrees, which may be arranged in the following order:—1. The district tribunals. 2. The chambers, or tribunals of government. 3. The departments of the senate. 4. The attorneys-general attached to each department. 5. The committee of requests, to transfer the causes to the general assembly of the senate. 6. The general assembly of the senate. 7. The minister of justice, assisted by the council of consultation. 8. The commission of requests a second time, to transfer the business to the council of the empire. 9. The department of the council

of the empire. 10. The general assembly of the council of the empire. 11. The emperor himself.”

LANDED TENURE IN RUSSIA.—SERFDOM.

In the earliest periods of Russian history, all the land was national property, and held in common. There was no private right or title to a single acre. The people were nomadic, and moved freely over the steppes and plains and along the banks of rivers. So soon as they had passed from the pastoral to the agricultural state, they formed themselves into village communities, in many respects similar to the ancient system of Hindostan; but they still retained the communistic principle. A village, geographically considered, is a tract of country comprising some hundreds or thousands of acres of arable or waste land, with or without forests and river fisheries; politically viewed, it resembles a corporation, municipality, or township. As in India the village was presided over by an officer called the potail, so in Russia each village community was governed by a starost; and both were elected by universal suffrage. Thus political was substituted for patriarchal rule; but this change, purely administrative, did not weaken the spirit of family association, or in any degree modify the ancient right to property in land.

In this democracy, the father was supreme in his household; but a perfect equality existed among all the other members of the family. Without some chief, from whose decree there was no appeal, confusion and anarchy must have arisen. When the father died, the eldest son was invested with paternal authority; if he became a priest, or was mentally disqualified to fulfil his duties, a successor was elected by vote; and when the choice fell upon the youngest, all paid him implicit obedience. This patriarchal spirit pervaded all classes, and was equally respected in the palace and in the cottage. It is fully recognised in the old proverbs of Russia; for instance—“The opinion of the eldest is

always just. Wherever there is old age there is reason. Younger brothers should look up to the eldest as they would to their father." The Grand-Duke Vladimir, in his last will and testament, enjoined the following precept on his children—"Respect the old as a father, the young as a brother." Unity in the household, unity in the village or township, unity in the empire, is the basis of the national life of Russia. Whoever abandoned this unity of family and community of property, lost for ever his inheritance; such acts, always rare in earlier times, were deemed a public calamity, and the seceders were branded as *black separatists*.

These fundamental principles of nomadic society still manifest themselves in the character of all classes of the people, in their manners and customs. The patriarchal system has left indelible traces of its influence not only in traditions, but in existing usages. The fidelity, devotedness, and affection with which all are animated towards the czar flow from this source; he is revered as the father of the whole population; nor does he receive a slavish obedience from the common people, for their submission to him is that of a child to his parent; and though absolute, it is really founded on filial duty and filial love. A similar feeling pervades every family where the ancient manners of Russia are still preserved; and this phase of nationality is strikingly illustrated by the following anecdotes recorded by Haxthausen:—

"It is the custom at Moscow for all the daughters, whether married or single, to pass the whole of their evenings in the apartment of their mother, which greatly deranges the domestic life of the husband. The Princess G. was mentioned to me as the type of the wife of a boyar of ancient Russia: every evening, till her death, she was surrounded by her daughters. On one occasion one of the daughters, the Princess A., who held a high position at court, was prevented by her duty from visiting her mother, who, on the following morning, overwhelmed her with the bitterest reproaches. Her daughter excused herself by

pleading her obligations to the etiquette of the palace ; but the sole answer was, ‘Every evening of a daughter belongs to the mother ; that is the usage of Russia.’ Her son, who had commanded a *corps d’armée*, as general-in-chief, and who had been, successively, an ambassador, a governor-general, and had filled other high offices, was obliged, when at St. Petersburg, to wait on his mother every morning. He ventured one day to make a slight change in the stables of his mother, by substituting a good horse for one that he deemed bad ; his mother resented this boldness ; for on the following morning she inflicted on him several blows, which he received with submission.”

Facts of this character reveal the inner life of a nation ; and we may trace the despotism of the government to the despotism of family. This docility or obedience is derived from the old nomadic constitution, based on the patriarchal principle, and constitutes the essential difference between the people of Russia and the people of Western Europe ; for the manners of a country soon pass into its laws, and are with difficulty uprooted. The absolute power of the father of a family was transferred to the starost of the primitive Selavonian villages ; and the grand-dukes and emperors, as fathers of the whole community, were invested with autocratic rule. The primitive seats of settlement are known in the language of Russia by the endearing expressions of maternity ; thus they speak of their early towns as the Mother Kieff, the Mother Sousdal, the Mother Vladimir, the Common Mothers Novgorod and Moscow. The mother township ruled the villages in the district of which it was the centre. Tradition also calls the river Volga mother, and also the high-road of Vladimir. These national peculiarities had their origin in the common right to the soil ; for as none were excluded from its usufruct, all regarded it with filial affection as their patrimony and their home.

This democratic or communistic self-government, derived from the patriarchal system, has marked the social commencements of all peoples, whatever variations may be detected in their

general outlines. It is observable in the early stages both of the Indo-Germanic and Indo-Sclavonian tribes. When Roman legislation penetrated among the former, the ancient fabric was undermined and fell, feudalism raising itself on the ruins ; the latter escaped this shock, and the Serbs, Bulgarians, and Montenegrins preserved the primitive economy in its purity for even a longer period than the Russians. However, nations not isolated from the rest of the world, as the Japanese and Chinese, are prone to innovate on their early institutions, and adopt foreign customs ; and Peter the Great was a reformer by policy and conviction. His chief advisers were not natives of the country ; and that prince was the first who made landed property hereditary, thus striking a deadly blow at the rural communes.

From time immemorial the czars carved out estates for those who had served them faithfully ; but they were only held for life, resembling in this limitation the benefices created by Charles Martel in France. They also fixed the limits of the locations of villages and townships. Immense territories remained unappropriated ; from time to time portions of these were given to the peasants collected in communities, but they only enjoyed the usufruct. The remainder was left, provisionally, uncultivated, as a reserve for any increase of population. So far back as the twelfth century the chroniclers speak of donations to the boyars, convents, and municipalities. Military nobles had estates for life, but on the condition of residence. This tenure was called *pomestia* ; but it was not completely developed till the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The sons of boyars and the Cossacks had lands allotted to them on the frontiers, which they were bound to defend against invasion. They paid the annual tax called *obrok*.

Before the ducal or imperial prerogative was centralised in a supreme and single czar, the boyars transferred their allegiance and services from petty prince to petty prince ; but at the same time they surrendered their lands, and received others from their

new masters or suzerains. It was only after the incorporation of the small principalities in the grand-duchy of Moscow, that the estates of the nobles acquired any stability; before that event not a trace can be discovered of permanent tenure. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the czars began to give hereditary instead of life estates. Hereditary estates were called *wotchini*. Under Peter the Great the whole military and civil administration underwent a fundamental change. After the extermination of the Strelitz, a standing army superseded the militia. Monied salaries were paid to the functionaries of the state instead of compensating them out of the usufruct of the land; the system of *pomestia* disappeared, and all property was made hereditary. When Peter the Great conferred hereditary estates on his nobility, he transferred the peasants living on and cultivating them, and thus they became serfs or bondsmen. Then was effected the greatest social and territorial revolution ever witnessed in Russia, and we must trace its antecedents.

In the earlier centuries the petty princes of Russia were fully occupied in consolidating their authority over the greater towns, which were the centres of villages, or defending themselves against the incursions of the Asiatic hordes. They were not sufficiently strong to harass the peasants, or mutilate the old communistic organisation, though they sometimes invaded the franchises and privileges both of townsmen and cultivators; but the municipality retained its integrity, while some of its members suffered. The first written ordinance which relates to the Russian peasants is dated at the commencement of the seventeenth century. It restrained their arbitrary removal from domain to domain. This did not deny the right of voluntary migration, nor interfere with personal liberty. The ordinance was framed with an economical motive, the peasants too freely abandoning the villages round which the land was poor, to settle on more fertile soils. This scattering of the population was certainly an evil that required correction; but a greater evil was the arbitrary expulsion of the

peasants by the boyars from the districts in which they had been born. It was the Czar Boris Godounof who made this law in the interests of the peasants and smaller proprietors, and perhaps from conscientious motives; but at the same time he avenged himself on the wealthy boyars, who opposed his usurpation of supreme power, and detested him. This ordinance, however, proved the first step to the servitude of the peasants; for till the time of Godounof the only serfs or slaves were prisoners of war, or persons reduced to serfdom by judicial decree, and those who had voluntarily sold themselves. These cultivated the lands of the nobles.

At this period the crown peasants exercised all the ancient privileges of the communistic system, and retained the independent administration of their own affairs; but the peasants on private property, although the lords had only a life interest, were subjected to the administration of justice exercised by the usufructuaries of the soil. The former seldom migrated; with the latter it had become a common practice. The revolution effected by Boris Godounof will be better understood if we sketch the social relations of Russia in its gradations of rank so far as they bear on agriculture.

Beneath the boyars were the *odnovertzi*. These were decayed noblemen, who devoted themselves to husbandry. The appellation by which they were distinguished denoted that their whole property consisted in a single manor-house, which they tenanted, and a piece of ground, which they were bound to cultivate with their own hands. They were allowed to sell parcels of this land, but only to those of their own class. The derivation of *Odnovertzi* is from *Odno*, one, and *Dvor*, a house; they were owners only of one habitation.

The *snakomtzi* (acquaintance) were, in early times, poor noblemen, who lived as poor companions with the boyars. They took their meals at the table of their patron, and shared the recreations of his idle hours. Some superintended his estates as stewards,

others managed his household ; but they rendered no services in any menial capacity. When the boyar went to court in grand state, which was always on horseback, the *snakomtzi* walked before him ; but this was not considered a mark of servility, but of gratitude and respect. When the boyar was invited to an entertainment, the *snakomtzi* were received among the guests as noblemen, not as dependents.

The *dieti boyarskie* (boyar children) were not noble, but they were free people. Some of them, however, were descended from even princely families ; but they were impoverished and without estates. To each of them some lands were granted, from which they were allowed to reap all the benefit, on condition that they held themselves in readiness for military service, completely accoutred, with a horse, and provisions for a whole season. As they died, their children stepped into their place, and the fiefs of such as were childless reverted to the crown, and were granted to others.

When there were no other slaves than those captured in war, reduced to serfdom by judicial sentence, or those who had voluntarily sold themselves, their owner might bequeath them by will to his children, bestow them as a marriage-portion on his daughters, or sell them to any purchaser. But by a ukase of 1556 this law was modified ; for it enjoined that captives, excepting those who had married a female slave, should remain in bondage only to the death of their lord ; but those who had so married, and also their posterity, for ever forfeited their freedom. They who, having been free, entered into vassalage, and made the proper inscriptions on doing so, recovered their liberty on the death of him to whom they were inscribed ; these could neither be sold nor given in dowry.

The knaves, or serfs, were originally free people. They were called *kabalnie*, because they served under indentures ; but the slaves proper or captives were called *polnie* (full), and also *starinnie* (old) vassals. The former received wages under a

written contract, by which they covenanted to serve for a term of years specified, or till the death of their employer. The contract was called the *kabala*. He who hired the services of a free man was bound to look to his certificate of character confirmed by the court of judicature of the district ; if he neglected this precaution, he could not punish the vassal who robbed him or ran away. This law was passed to exterminate vagabonds who could give no satisfactory account of themselves.

The boors were free, and were known as the “numbered people,” or *tshislenie liudi*. This numbering had been introduced by the Tatars, who enumerated all who lived in houses, possessed land, or carried on trade ; and on all these they levied taxes. Those who had no house, nor any visible property, were not enumerated, and were exempt from tax. By the *sudebnik*, the boors were allowed to hire or sell themselves as vassals for a term of years, or during the life of him with whom they made the contract ; but by the *uloshenie* of the Czar Alexis Mikailovitch, this practice was forbidden, in order to deprive them of the means of evading the crown taxes ; for at that time they were levied on the manorial farms, and not by a poll-tax. However, vassals had no tenement of their own, but lived with their master, and were exempt from the crown-tax.

In the old laws, called the Yaroslavian statutes, from the name of the Grand-Duke Yaroslaf, nothing is said of torture ; but it is expressly treated of in the *sudebnik*, and great discretion is enjoined in its infliction. Thus, if a person were taken with stolen goods upon him, and he denied the theft, it was directed to make inquiries as to his general character ; if it proved bad, he was put to the torture ; if good, he had a regular trial. Cutting and maiming with deadly instruments were atoned for by pecuniary fine ; the evidence of the outrage was the wound or scar. Whoever broke the arm of another paid as much as the slayer of a man. Murder might be retaliated by relations, or they might accept a sum of money in lieu of revenge. He who took away the horse,

clothes, or weapons of another, was compelled to make restitution, and was also mulcted. For damaging any household utensil, the compensation was to be made in cattle. Excepting blood for blood, in the case of relations pursuing the murderer, the individual aggrieved was prohibited from taking the law into his own hands; the decision was referred to twelve select men, before whom the culprit was bound to appear in five days after the charge was lodged. It is remarkable that trial by jury should have been observed in barbarous Russia; but it was an evident remnant of ancient freedom and equality before the law, probably introduced by the Varangians. It is also curious to observe, that the beard was held in such high esteem and honour, that it was a clear law in the Novgorodian code, that whoever plucked hair from another's beard was fined four times as much as for cutting a finger.*

Soon after the ordinance of Boris had passed, he further decreed, that the servants of the nobles, who worked by contract, should not be allowed to quit their masters; and the masters were prohibited from dismissing those servants who had lived with them for a certain period. By this second law, thousands and thousands of freemen became serfs without knowing it. It would be inconceivable how a popular czar, who was so determined an antagonist to the boyars, could have been induced to promulgate so anti-democratical a measure, did we not find a reason for it in the menacing danger of a growing rural proletariat, which had united themselves with the rebellious and turbulent boyars. Boris checked the movement of the proletaries by making them slaves. It was a cruel measure, which nothing could justify; but it must be admitted that the state of the country was critical. The boyars themselves had caused the evils for which the free cultivators were punished; for they frequently dismissed, and suddenly, large numbers of their contract servants when the harvests failed, or when their own personal extravagance compelled them to economise. The dismissed free servants then vagabondised, as beggars

* These particulars we have borrowed from Tooke.

or robbers, in the villages, and on the high roads, sometimes allying themselves with the highwaymen of the Volga, or with the Cossacks of the Don. The Cossacks, in particular, were well pleased to receive them; for they became excellent recruits, and the best guides through the country in the Cossack incursions into Russia and Poland. By this introduction of serfdom Boris gained two objects; he compelled the occupiers of the land to maintain their people during famine or scarcity, and cut off reinforcements to the Cossacks, by forbidding the peasants to travel out of their allotted districts. Famine was a most frequent evil in those days. In 1601 and 1602, owing to the almost complete failure of the crops, those who lived at the time, and whose chronicles have been preserved, describe the scenes that occurred in the most horrible terms. The Russian peasants became cannibals, eating their wives and children.

The policy of Godonouf was defeated, but the evil of slavery remained. Far from checking desertions to the Cossacks, the ordinance increased them. The peasants preferred death to serfdom, and deserted *en masse*. Boris was too weak to cause his authority to be respected. These fugitive bands recruited the Polish army of the false Demetrius, and of the other impostors whose history has been already recorded. The devastation of Russia in the beginning of the seventeenth century was the punishment of the crime perpetrated against the rights of man.

Much of the popular poetry of Russia derives its colouring from this epoch of brigandage. The freebooter is glorified in national songs, for in the eye of the serf he is the model of a free man. He roves where he pleases, acknowledging no master. The serf listens with delight to the wild adventures of the outlawed forester, and in imagination shakes off his fetters, and cries aloud for vengeance: "We will come and drink your wine! Patience, we will come and caress your wives; we will plunder your wealth; we will no longer work in the fields, poor and despised. No; we will associate with the dark night, and wear the knife in

our belts, and join our friends in the coverts of the woods. Then we will sally forth and kill the lord in his castle, and pillage the merchant on the highway ; and every one will admire us. The youths who wander on the hills or plains, and the old men in their huts, will give us a friendly greeting.”

Such is a specimen of the sentiments of the old ballad-poetry which the serf commits to memory. His sympathies are with the brigand, not with his victim ; for he considers the brigand in the character of an emancipated serf who has regained his liberty by personal courage and daring. The boyar is his enemy, not the freebooter. The bandit and the enslaved serf are allies, brothers.

The ordinance which prohibited rural migration offended the prejudices of the restless minority of the old Russians, who had not forgotten ancient customs ; but it did not destroy the communistic organisation. The law of Godounof deprived the Russian of his nomadic ubiquity, so much cherished by eastern peoples. By that act he laid the foundation, perhaps unconsciously, of the high police so infamous and degrading throughout Russia, as it encourages an army of spies. It was this ordinance against itinerancy which converted the free peasant into an *adscriptus glebæ*, reducing him to a chattel, to be bought and sold with the cattle on the estate. What a lying legislation has called “protection” to the peasant, deprived him of the dignity of manhood.

Godounof pretended to be a social reformer. He broke the power of the boyars and proletaries by fire, sword, and famine. He was what is now called a citizen king, who upheld the middle classes against the nobles and the populace. He completed the centralisation of political power at Moscow, commenced by his predecessors. He enlarged the Russian dominions by conquest, and by riveting the peasant to the soil, planted some of the first seeds of social centralisation. The Russian is ever restless and eager for adventure, and it is this characteristic of his mind, and his instinct for expansion, which have spread the empire to the

Pacific and Arctic oceans, the Baltic and Caspian seas. Boris deprived the Russian peasant of his personal independence, but he did not invade the principle of village communities. Excluded from any share in general politics, the peasant devoted his mind exclusively to the internal affairs of his rural republic, where he ruled instead of a government functionary.

Violent and cruel as were the proceedings of Boris, it is, however, to be observed, that the peasants had frequently been wronged before his reign, and laws had been made for their protection. Thus we find in the code of Ivan the Terrible, enacted in 1550, called *Sudebnik*, or the Manual of Judges, a clause prohibiting the functionaries of the czar from strangling the peasant, that right being reserved to the starosts or chiefs of the village community elected by the peasants themselves; and in the event of this order being violated, the starosts were empowered to release the peasants, and to levy a fine for any outrage offered to their persons. This same code allowed peasants to hold landed property—that is to say, its usufruct, and defend their title to it in courts of justice. The Czar Alexis Michaelovitch confirmed this right in his supplementary code, called *Ulogenie*; but he did not allow them to hold houses or shops in towns. This last restriction was confined to peasants located on private property, greater privileges being conferred on those who lived on the crown lands. These latter were permitted to establish themselves in towns, to embark in trade, or work as mechanics. Whoever insulted them was liable to a pecuniary fine. But none of these provisions applied to the serfs or slaves who existed in small numbers, as already remarked, before the time of Boris Godounof. These serfs were called *khalopi*. It is further to be observed, that at this epoch a distinction had already been established between the peasants on the crown lands and those on private property. The former enjoyed in all its primitive purity the communistic organisation of the most ancient times, while the latter were almost wholly dependent on their lords in all that

related to the administration of justice. It is not difficult to account for this difference. In those ages the central power was feeble, and could not restrain abuses; the distance was great from the provinces to the capital; so that the lords could become usurpers with impunity. Boris Godounof, therefore, had some precedents to act upon; but nothing can justify his conduct.

Peter the Great completed what Godounof had left unfinished, by making estates hereditary, as well as by reducing the peasants to serfdom. He thus armed the proprietors with the most formidable power, and left the bondsmen no hope of redress except in a successful insurrection. This social reformer, who professed a desire to improve his country, riveted the chains of slavery on the bulk of the population and on their posterity. He hated the country people, because they opposed national traditions to his Germanic innovations, and he punished their resistance by reducing them to the condition of hewers of wood and drawers of water. Surely it was not for this most atrocious crime, which far outweighs any services he may have rendered to civilisation, that he has received the title of the "Great!" From his time to the reign of Catherine II., the enslaved peasants constantly meditated vengeance on their oppressors; but the favourable opportunity did not arrive till the rebellion of Pugatscheff, the celebrated Cossack of the Don. In the narrative of her reign it has been stated that after his first victories he caused a medal to be struck with the inscription, "Peter III., Emperor of all the Russias;" and on the reverse, *Redivivus et ultor*. Under him the serfs rallied to make a desperate effort for liberty. Whether they believed or not that the murdered Peter was miraculously restored to life, or had escaped from his assassins and remained in concealment till he could strike a blow to recover his throne, there can be no doubt that circumstances were highly favourable to the revolt; and had Pugatscheff been more prudent and less addicted to debauchery, the serfs might have won their emancipation. As Rabbe

has dismissed this event in a few sentences, it may be enlarged upon in this section.

Catherine had bestowed immense estates on her depraved lovers,—if men can be called lovers who gratify the lust of a Messalina to satiate their avarice or ambition. These wretches, gorged with the plunder of the national property, treated the serfs worse than their dogs. They were as devoid of feeling as of honour. The Russians have ever been a pious people, even to fanaticism, and looked with horror on the orgies of the German czarina, exulting that she was not of their race or blood. She had even seized and secularised the lands of the Church, and handed them over to the companions of her guilt. As soon then as Pugatscheff raised his banner, the indignant peasants flocked to him, and the population of four provinces of the empire rallied under the bold Cossack. Then it was that the hatchet of the serf sought to sever the crown from the land, and establish a democracy based on the ancient communistic organisation. The chief weapon of the serfs was fire. They burnt the houses of the nobles, and for awhile the conflagration threatened to illumine the Kremlin at Moscow, and melt the frozen waters of the Neva. The rebellion spread itself from the Tver to the Oural. It was the combined armed protest of the Cossack and the serf against despotism,—the last unsuccessful effort to break the fetters of the enslaved cultivators of the soil.

It has already been stated, that according to the primitive constitution or traditions of Russia the whole soil, one and indivisible, belonged to the Russian people, excluding all private property, except as to the usufruct; and that up to the time of Peter the Great none enjoyed more than the usufruct of the land. The supreme power of allotting portions for life, or for terms of years, belonged to the czars by virtue of their ducal prerogative, and the czars delegated this power of allotment to the village municipalities and to the boyars, as well as to conventual and

monastic establishments. So long as this primitive system was in force, there was no occasion for any territorial register; but when Peter the Great introduced private and hereditary property, it became necessary to have a record of what had been surrendered and of what had been retained. The nobles were continually trespassing on the crown land, adding field after field to their patrimonies; and in 1765 the abuse had become so serious, and the imperial revenues had been so greatly depreciated by these encroachments, that a survey was appointed in that year. It was a gigantic undertaking, when the immense regions are considered; and it is not surprising that it required eighty years to settle disputed claims in fifty governments. Another attempt was made in 1837, but it led to no accurate results. Siberia was not included in either survey.

Cultivated crown-lands had been assigned to the villages at an early period, and as these villages increased in size and population, they received a portion of the uncultivated crown-land, for which they paid rent. The village communities had also allotments of forests, but these were subject to imperial administration. Peter the Great was the first czar who appreciated the importance of timber, as he was the first to construct vessels of war. He placed the forests under the Admiralty. Since then they have alternately been confided to the financial and naval departments; but in 1826 their general administration was intrusted to the financial department of each of the separate governments into which the empire is divided; but the forests, which are reserved for naval and mining purposes, are ruled by special boards. According to a survey made in 1845, the total area of the crown forests measures about 23,400 square miles, without including those allotted to the Cossacks, the towns, and the mines. From this estimate Siberia is also excluded.*

According to a report submitted to the Minister of the Crown

* Haxthausen, p. 511.

Lands in 1833, and quoted by Haxthausen, the following was at that date the numerical peasant population on the crown lands :

8,431,837 male peasants.

126,799 enfranchised by individuals.

167,626 foreign colonists.

760,000 nomadic.

7,499 exiled colonists.

13,000 Jewish agriculturists.

1,076,877 excess of births over deaths up to 1845, shown by a subsequent census.

10,583,638 males.

11,641,437 females.

22,225,075 total.

One of the greatest evils in Russia, so far as the interests of agriculture are involved, is the absence of those we call "country gentlemen." The nobility now hold more than one half of the cultivated land, and, of both sexes, 24,000,000 of serfs; but there is not amongst them a Coke of Holkham, a Lord Spencer, or an Earl Ducie. Many reasons may be assigned for this neglect of rural economy. The Russians never passed through an age of chivalry, which has left such indelible impressions in Western Europe. They never had feudal castles with donjons, keeps, and moats; and they have no local reminiscences to cherish, no local traditions to influence their feelings. They have indeed country houses, but rarely visit them. The distance of these from each other is so very great, that, when on their estates, they are isolated from all society. They have no family pride in their domains, but look upon them as a fundholder looks upon consols—as a mere source of income. Of course, the serfs detest their presence, and the landlords naturally shun those who hate them. They sell their property for a slight gain, and both land and serfs are handed over to new masters. It is said that in Russia large fortunes never reach the third generation. Peter the Great, by a

ukase dated 13th March, 1713, wished to impose on the nobility the law of primogeniture and entail; but it was too radically opposed to tradition and popular customs to meet with more than the most limited success. There are very few, and those only among the highest nobility, who still enjoy their ancient patrimonies. All this class reside at Moscow or St. Petersburg, or in the chief towns of the several governments; they have always and unitedly resisted every effort made by the czars to improve the condition of the serf, and looked with jealousy and suspicion on every scheme designed to elevate the status of the crown peasants.

Peter the Great contemplated the establishment of a college to teach the science of agriculture. Catherine II. meditated a comprehensive plan for the better organisation of the peasants. Paul I. instituted cantonal administrations; and, in 1811, Alexander urged the necessity of carrying out the views of Catherine, and they were investigated by Count Gourieff; but every effort has proved vain, nor is this surprising, as the whole system is based on slavery. Under the present regime the forests are wantonly fired and otherwise devastated. Many proprietary lands are drained by turning the waters among the trees on the crown-land domains, and marshes and swamps are formed. There is no sufficient inspection; for instance, in the government of Archangel there is only one man to superintend and preserve from injury thirty-five square miles of timber; and in the government of Wolgoda ten foresters have the charge of 600,000 square miles. The culture of artificial grass is unknown; there are no rich meadows; consequently few cattle, and a want of animal manures. The potato is only grown in the western and Baltic provinces. Even the fundamental law of Russia has been violated by the working of this horrible system. The spirit of that law is embodied in the following traditional expression: "We serfs belong to our lords and masters, but the land of the country belongs to us. The land is there to feed us; it belongs to the people and to the czar, who

has only given the nobles the usufruct." Now it was proved in 1837 that a vast number of peasants were absolutely destitute, plundered of the share to which they were entitled by virtue of the communistic organisation. The rate of tax was uniform for all of them, without any regard to their means of paying it; for it was a poll tax, not a property tax. Many were crushed by the fiscal injustice. They were compelled to construct roads, and soldiers were billeted upon them. These two last obligations were not regulated by the starosts of the villages, but by the ispravnik, a functionary elected by the nobles in the respective governments, and that officer took care to put the heaviest burdens on the peasants of the crown, so as to ease, or wholly exempt, the peasants belonging to the nobles, to whose votes the ispravnik owed his position. The recruiting system for the army was also fatal to agriculture. A rule was passed that the military conscription should first take place among the most numerous families, which profoundly shocked the patriarchal manners of the people; for it had been the immemorial usage in Russia for all the members of a family to live together under the same roof, grandfather and grandchildren. The recruiting law led to the dispersion of families, and sometimes only one male remained fit to bear arms when he was drafted, the household were deprived of their natural supporter. In the western provinces formerly belonging to Poland it was officially ascertained that out of 600,000 peasants only 150,000 possessed a single head of cattle for each family, and 125,000 did not own a single horned beast. To remedy these and other evils, the Emperor Nicholas nominated a ministerial Board on the 1st January, 1838, at the head of which he placed Count Kisselef, who was directed to sound the whole question to its lowest depths, not only in the interests of the peasants, but in the interests of agriculture. In this inquiry was involved the welfare of 22,000,000 of men, or more than one third of the whole population of the empire. Extensive innovations were to be avoided; the national and patriarchal organisation

tion of the village municipalities was to be preserved, but all abuses were to be corrected.

“ The new minister,” says Haxthausen, “ expressed himself in favour of these principles ; increase of revenue was only to be sought for in those crown lands not yet appropriated ; the management of the forests was to be improved, and the articles of farming were to be revised. He wished to avoid all coercive measures, and only to innovate so as to *protect* the peasants, according to their state of civilisation, and their capacity for progress, desiring to improve their condition by education, encouragement, and pecuniary aid. It was necessary to guarantee them against abuses, and inspire them with the confidence of effectual protection ; to stimulate their activity, to remove obstacles, and foster that desire for civilisation which is generally felt among the Russian peasants. While they were exhorted rigorously to discharge their legal obligations, on the other hand, the inviolability of their rights was frankly acknowledged. Before all other considerations, the religious instruction of the peasants was the chief object of solicitude. With a view to limit the number of government officials as much as possible, the village municipalities received stronger powers of self-government.”

The learned Prussian from whose *Studies of Russia* this extract is taken, is a warm partisan of Russia and the czar, and does not hesitate to express his conviction that Russia is intrusted with a sacred mission to christianise the Turks and overthrow the religion of Mahomet. He is the apologist of serfdom ; and while knowing that the peasants can be sold as cattle, declares that “ the inviolability of their rights was frankly acknowledged.” He is delighted that the new measures guaranteed them *protection*, and restrained *abuses*,—as though the denial of personal freedom was not the most atrocious of crimes. As to their religious education, it teaches them to worship the czar ; and lest they should learn the common origin of our race, they are not permitted to read the Bible. However, a reform was effected ; and certainly its object was to

mitigate the horrors of slavery. We shall sketch the broad outlines of the principal provisions of the new code.

No commune or village municipality was to consist of less than 1500 inhabitants. All below that rate of population were to be incorporated, till the minimum was reached.

A canton or bailiwick (called *Wolosti*) was fixed at 6000 souls. The local administration was divided into cantonal and communal. Each cantonal administration was directed by a president (*golowa*), two assessors, and a registrar. Where several villages were united to form a municipality, the corporation was superintended by a mayor (*starschina*), and each constituent village by the *starost*, a receiver of taxes, and an inspector of the communal granary. All the functionaries were to be elected by and out of the class of peasants, convened in communal assemblies, by ballot. These communal assemblies consist of delegates, one delegate representing five hearths or families. The cantonal assemblies are composed of a committee, to which each of the communal assemblies furnishes its contingent, in the proportion of one delegate for every ten hearths or families. These assemblies exercise very remarkable powers, considering that all their members are serfs. They elect the functionaries, debate and decide upon their local affairs, such as the allocation of land, the administration of what are called the "articles of farming," as mills, &c., the assessment of taxes, the control of the expenditure, the admission of new members into the municipality, the leave of absence to those members who desire to visit towns, the recruiting service, petitions and communications addressed to superior authorities. The communal assemblies meet for the dispatch of business regularly three times in each year; but in emergencies they may hold an extraordinary session, after having received permission from the chief government officer of the district. These are most remarkable privileges in a community of serfs, for they confer a modified self-government; and for this reform the Emperor Nicholas is entitled to high praise.

The administration of justice on the crown lands is also conducted on excellent principles. There are village tribunals in each commune and in each canton. In the communes, the *starschina* presides, and he is aided by two assistant-judges elected by the communists, who are called *men of conscience*; for they are to decide according to equity and common sense, rejecting all legal technicalities; in the cantons, the *golowa* presides, also assisted by two men of conscience. These tribunals have cognisance of all offences against the person, and of all disputes in relation to property; but it is specially provided that all differences shall in the first instance be submitted to arbitration, in order to effect a reconciliation between the litigants. It is only when this attempt fails that recourse is had to the tribunal, which delivers judgment in writing on the very day of the trial, so that all vexatious postponement is avoided, no dilatory pleas being allowed. The tribunals are, however, restrained within certain limits. The communal tribunals cannot award heavier penalties than five roubles; the cantonal tribunals are limited to fifteen roubles. However, by the free consent of both parties, they may decide cases involving larger damages. Two general rules prescribe, point by point, the method in which police and judiciary cases are to be conducted in these tribunals. They have also a criminal jurisdiction; but in this respect the government leading functionaries of the district attend at the preliminary proceedings, to protect the peasants against any jealousy or prejudice that may arise against the party accused.

In reference to land, each commune is regarded as a unity. The number of these unities amounts to 7000. The land is divided into lots, each male receiving one. The tax on one being fixed, it is only necessary to multiply it by the male population, to determine the tax of the whole commune; and again multiplying this by 7000, the entire annual tax from the peasants on the crown-lands is easily ascertained.

Connected with these reforms is a plan of transcolonisation.

All desert and uncultivated land has been carefully surveyed and measured, so as to form the basis of new and future communities, when population becomes too dense in the old settlements. Transcolonisation is to be voluntary, under the supervision of the government. The following is to be the course of procedure: Those families who have signified their intention to change their residence, are to send one of their members to inspect the future colony, and he is to provide shelter for the rest and fodder for the cattle. When every thing is prepared, the whole family are to be removed. Government gratuitously supplies beasts of burden and funds to defray the first outlay on the new establishment. For this purpose 500,000 paper roubles are annually appropriated. All arrears that may be due on the old holding by these transcolonised peasants is remitted. During the first six years no soldiers are to be billeted on them; during the first four years they are exempt from every tax; in the next four years they pay but half the tax, and are free from the three next ensuing military conscriptions.

Throughout this extensive empire, which varies so considerably both in soil and climate, model farms have been established, and the young peasants are taught the science of agriculture, and the most efficient means of improving the breed of cattle. Special schools have also been founded to teach horticulture, the management of silk-worms and of the vine, of potatoes and tobacco. The young peasants who have best proved their proficiency are promoted to superintendents of model farms in their native villages.

Small village banks have also been founded by the cantonal administrations, where the peasants receive advances to enable them to complete their operations before harvest. There are also savings'-banks. The villages have been architecturally improved, as well as the bridges, by government. Civil engineers are sent to the communes and cantons, who give their advice gratuitously to the peasants, if they desire to improve their cottages. Timber is given to them from the crown forests. To guard against fa-

mine, local granaries are established in each commune, and each communist must contribute his portion. This amounts, in periods of eight years, to two tschetwerts of corn to be deposited by each inhabitant. Central granaries are established on all the points which offer the readiest communications with different parts of the empire, generally at the confluence of rivers.

This great reform is entirely due to the Emperor Nicholas. Nothing can justify serfdom ; but there is merit in mitigating its horrors. The czar has shown an example to his nobility, and he risked his life and throne in the attempt. Long years must elapse before these enlightened measures produce all the good that will ultimately be realised, but the education of the peasants must gradually infuse into them a love of liberty ; and as the contrast becomes more striking between those who belong to the crown and those who belong to individuals, the dread of revolt may induce the nobility to surrender their usurped privileges. To a certain extent, it is true that the serf does not desire freedom. The fields and garden that he cultivates, the house which shelters him against the severity of the climate, do not belong to him ; but if he possesses nothing—if he owes the sweat of his brow to his master—the master owes to him seed-corn when the harvest fails, beasts of burden when murrain destroys his cattle, a new house when the old one is burned. Were the peasants free, they would become farmers, and till the soil at their own risk ; as serfs, they have no care for the future, and seem to have little moral elevation, because they are grossly ignorant and brutalised by habit ; but degraded as they are, they are not insensible to the generous efforts made by Nicholas for their welfare. Indeed, the peasants love him as a father, and over them he exercises most remarkable influence. In narrating the reign of Alexander, it has been stated that he prohibited the sale of serfs unless the purchaser also bought the land ; and laid it down as a principle that he would not give away the peasants as property. In 1841, the Emperor Nicholas published a ukase relative to serfdom, the object of

which was to extend the principle of emancipation ; and as it led to a servile revolt and horrible massacres, for which he cannot justly be blamed, some of the clauses of that ukase ought to be here enumerated :

1. The payments of the peasants to their lords may be stipulated in their contracts to be payable in money, in kind, or in labour.

2. If the peasants fail to perform the conditions of their contracts, they shall be constrained to do so by the urban police, under the direction of the chief of the nobility of the district and of the government authorities.

3. The peasants, after having signed contracts between themselves and their lords, shall be denominated "peasants having obligations to fulfil."

8. The lords, and peasants whom they enfranchised, shall regard the contracts passed between them as indissoluble, reserving, however, the right to change certain clauses, such as those which relate to the division of land or rents for a limited period. In every case where the property is mortgaged in the banks of the crown, these changes must be approved of by the crown ; and in every case the sanction of the government is indispensable.

9. The contracts passed according to the preceding regulations, with the consent of the lords, must be drawn up on stamped paper, and submitted to our examination; to receive our sanction and signature.

The nobility were highly displeased with this ukase, as they have ever been with any interference between themselves and the serfs. They claim the exclusive right of making what bargains they please with their bondsmen, and were particularly incensed against the 9th clause, which made the emperor a party to their contracts. They saw in the spirit of the ukase a tendency to emancipation ; and Nicholas was obliged to address an official communication, intended to be made public, through the minister of the interior, to the grand master of the police, the purport of

which was to make known that the new ukase was nothing more than the complement of the ordinance of 1803 ; and that in the future, as in the past, it would be entirely at the option of the lords to make or not to make contracts with their peasants.

About the time the ukase was published, the crown purchased of some necessitous or bankrupt lords a considerable district. The serfs rejoiced ; for on the imperial domains they are far better treated than on private estates. The peasants in the neighbourhood, which was on the Volga, sent deputies from their own body to Petersburg, imploring the emperor to become proprietor of the lands on which they were located. They were graciously received, and treated with kindness, and Nicholas addressed them in these words :—“ I cannot purchase all Russia ; but a time will come, I hope, when each peasant of this empire will be free. If it depended only on me, the Russians should enjoy, from this day forth, the independence which I wish for them, and to procure them which at a future period I am labouring with all my power.”

Such sentiments were admirable ; but the expression of them, in the terms stated, was indiscreet. They proved the signal of a servile war. On the return of the deputies to the Volga, they reported the conversation they had held with the emperor. It was hailed with joyous and grateful acclamations ; but the more amiable the czar appeared, the fiercer became the serf detestation of their masters. “ Our father desires our deliverance,” they exclaimed ; “ he wishes for nothing but our happiness. He said so to us himself. It is, then, only the nobles and their agents who are our enemies, and who oppose the good designs of our father. Let us avenge the emperor ! ” A revolt immediately broke out, and the peasants believed, in their gross ignorance, that they were only acting on an imperial hint. The whole province rose in open insurrection, burning and slaying, and committing the most horrible atrocities on the nobles, their agents, and their families. A French tutor, resident with a Russian nobleman of the highest class, and who had the best opportunities of arriving at exact

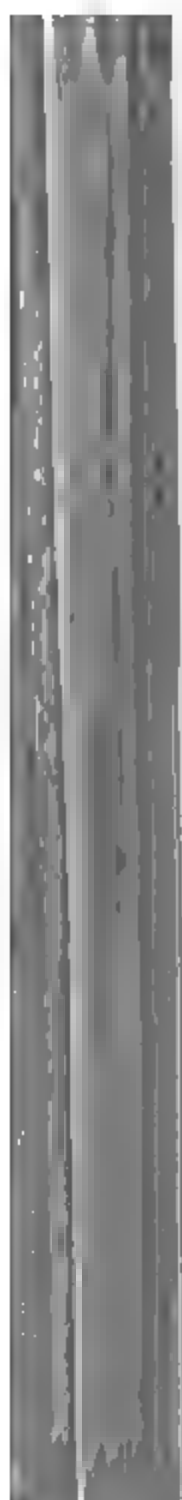
truth, informed De Custine that the serfs “spitted one and roasted him alive; they boiled another in a cauldron; they disembowelled and killed in various ways the stewards and agents of the estates. They murdered all they met, burnt whole towns, and, in short, devastated a province, not in the name of liberty—for they do not know what liberty means—but in the name of deliverance and the emperor.”

It has been stated that the peasant on the crown-lands is secured against famine by the establishment of the communal and cantonal granaries. The peasant who belongs to an individual is equally protected; for the Russian law compels the master to procure food for his serf. This law may be, and is, violated occasionally at great distances from the central government; but the punishment that awaits the detection of this neglect of duty generally secures its observance; for if a case of starvation reaches the emperor, the boyar is instantly exiled to Siberia, and his estates sequestrated and administered by the crown.

The autocracy of Russia has nothing to fear from the serfs. They are taught by the priests that the emperor is both a temporal and spiritual ruler, and that to question his mandates is blasphemy. Much also has been done to ameliorate their condition, and of this they are sensible. Their obedience, therefore, is secured by religion and gratitude, and they indulge the hope of future emancipation. When the absolutism of the czars is subverted, the blow will have been struck by the aristocracy, as chiefs of the military force; for simply as an ennobled order they have no weight in the country, no influence over public opinion. It has been shown what happened on the Volga, and the slightest intimation from the emperor would revive those savage scenes. In the earlier periods of England and France, the tenants followed the banner of their landlords, and fought for them against kingly prerogative; but the Russian landowner has no tenants. He is the master of slaves; and the interests of the two, instead of being identical, are antagonistic. Masters of slaves, the nobility are the

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slaves of the autocrat. They cannot appeal to a jury of their equals. Over their persons no *habeas corpus* act extends its ægis : the order of one man deports them to Siberia or the Caucasus. If they are not improvers of the soil—if they have no love of rural life—it is because they have no real liberty. Their homes are not their castles, in an English sense. Monotony reigns in Russia ; for he who stepped out of the ruts of routine would be suspected as an innovator, and the spies of the high police would dog his footsteps. There is no scope for mental activity ; and the only excitement which does not awaken jealousy is the excitement of dissipation. Man is reduced to an animal, and his moral and intellectual functions are uncultured. The aristocracy are prostrated by *ennui* ; the peasants demoralised by drink.

Autocracy can only exist in a state of complete isolation. It can have no friendships ; for friendships imply sympathy, and even equality. Under such a government, no gradations of rank, imperceptibly sliding into each other, so as to conceal the points of contact, can be tolerated. Were it otherwise, the emperor could easily do more for the serfs than he has done, to the unspeakable benefit of his empire. He might allow the peasants to purchase small estates of the crown, and make them freemen when he made them freeholders. This the system forbids ; and humanity must remain degraded, that a false grandeur may be imparted to the wearer of the Russian crown. Surely the ruler of a nation of bondsmen, who “ flaunt in rags, or flutter in brocade,” can himself possess little mental freedom, for conscience must daily warn him of his crime.

INDUSTRY AND TRADE OF RUSSIA.

Hunting and fishing have ever been the prime necessities of rude and barbarous tribes, and have continued to be the recreation of civilised men, long after the former have been elevated to pastoral and agricultural life. From the earliest times to the present, hunting and fishing have proved sources of wealth to Russia.

For a long period Siberia paid its tribute or tax to the czars in the skins of animals. Wild beasts chiefly abound in the northern and eastern districts of Russia, and especially on the islands which lie between America and Kamtschatka. The governments of Tobolsk, Perm, Oufa, Wiatka, Archangel, Olonetz, and Wolgoda, also abound in game; but where it is most plentiful, the chase is accompanied by the greatest dangers, and is followed by the least advanced of the Russian peoples, as the Tongouses, the Ostiaks of the Oby, and the Siberian Tatars, many of whom annually perish from hunger or wounds, or become the prey of their intended victims.

Among animals most valued for their skins is the sable. It frequents Asiatic Russia from the Aleutian Islands and Kamtschatka to the banks of the rivers Petchora and Kama; but the finest are found at Irkousk and Nertchinsk. Some are yellow, but the white are very scarce. The largest are found in Kamtschatka; their skins are thick, with long hair, but they are not very black, and formerly used to be sent to China to be dyed. When Kamtschatka was first conquered, a single hunter could capture sixty, eighty, or a hundred sables in a winter, and returned with a profit of 30,000 silver roubles; but since 1740 when the first expedition was undertaken, they have greatly diminished.* The Chinese, the Persians, and the Turks greatly prize these skins; and at Constantinople they fetch enormous prices.

The skins of foxes are classified into four varieties: 1. The red, striped with black and white, which are rare and dear. 2. The grey. 3. The foxes of the Steppes, which are of various colours. 4. Those of the icy regions, which are generally white though some are blue; they are generally found in the vicinity of the Frozen Ocean. Black foxes, which are very dear, are only found in Eastern Siberia. The skins of squirrels are also highly valued. The blackest come from Irkousk and Nertchinsk.

* *Tableau historique et statistique de l'Empire de Russie.* Par Henri Storch, tome ii. p. 13.

The largest have a silvery colour, and are much esteemed. In Siberia they are frequently caught with striped skins. Hares, rabbits, and wild cats are objects of trade with hatters. The skin of the bear is converted into beds, coverlets, bonnets, gloves, and harness for the dogs, who drag small carriages in Kamtschatka. Amongst the inhabitants of that country the flesh is eaten, and is found wholesome; but it is chiefly applied to familiar purposes of commerce. The beaver is very scarce, except in Siberia. Deer are abundant, especially on the banks of the Irtish and Jennessi. The wild boar appears in numerous droves on the Steppes near to the Somara and Volga. Wild birds are seen in immense flocks, and among the most valuable is the eider down duck; they chiefly frequent Archangel, Nova Zembla, and Spitzbergen.

In the Northern Ocean the Russians attack the whale, the seal, the dolphin, and other monsters of the deep; and derive wealth from the capture of cod and herring. As the largest fish seldom approach the White Sea, the merchants of Archangel and Olonetz pursue the fisheries in the isles of Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla. These places are uninhabited, and the climate is most rigorous; but Storch mentions a sailor of Mezan, named Fedor, or Theodore Rakhmanin, who passed twenty-six winters in Nova Zembla, which he also visited twice during each summer. He lived six winters in Spitzbergen, and for five years cruised along the coasts of Siberia, starting from the gulf of the Jennessi. At Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla the sun is invisible for three months; but this dreary night of ninety days is illuminated by the aurora borealis. The Russian sailors, in early days, used to count the lapse of twenty-four hours by the consumption of oil in their lamps. The walrus is valued for its fat, skin, and teeth, which are hard and white as ivory, and do not soon change colour. The Ob, the Irtish, the Tobol, and the Tom are rich in fish, particularly the white salmon, red mullet, and sturgeon.

The fisheries of the Caspian are carried on to a very large

extent, and enrich the merchants of Astracan. The Oural is also very productive, and sends annually to the great fair of Nijni-Novgorod supplies of fish which realise half a million of silver roubles, and 300,000 pouds weight of fresh and salt fish and caviar to Moseow. The Volga is famous for its sturgeon. The Terek, and the waters of the Black Sea and of the Sea of Azof, are very inferior in point of produce. It has been remarked as curious, that the eel is the only fish not found in the Volga, nor in its tributaries; it is also unknown in the rivers and lakes of Siberia.

The cities of Novgorod and Pskof traded with the Hanse Towns so early as 1276. The merchants of Hamburg and Lubeck usually sailed to Narva and Revel, and thence proceeded through Dorpat and Pskof to Novgorod.

Oleg established commercial laws between the Greeks and Russians, which his successor, Igor, improved. The exports of Russia were honey, wax, mead, tallow, and morse teeth, against which the Greeks exchanged gold, wines, fruit, corn, and clothing. The Russians carried on an early trade with Bulgaria. But Novgorod and Pskof were the principal seats of early foreign commerce, for those cities had mercantile connections with Riga, Revel, and the eighty-five cities and towns which formed the Hanseatic League of Germany. The etymology of Riga is found in a small arm of the Duna, called Rige, or Ryghe, which was afterwards converted into the Riesings Canal; that of Revel is sought for in two small islands lying near the harbour, which formerly were called Reffe, that is, sand-banks. In Russian it is called Kolivan.*

The Czar Ivan I. destroyed the commercial opulence of Novgorod. He annihilated its democratic institutions, suppressed its popular assemblies, confiscated the estates of the most influential citizens whom he had condemned to death, and is said to have conveyed to Moscow 300 cart-loads of gold, silver, and pre-

* Tooke's Russia.

cious stones, and a still larger amount of furs, cloths, and other merchandise. In 1485, 1487, and 1489, he successively deported whole families to other towns, where he compelled them to reside. All the German merchants residing in the city were imprisoned. The large counting-house of the Hanseatic League was closed, and the property in its warehouses confiscated. In 1509, Pskof shared the same fate. The wealth of Novgorod seized by Ivan is probably exaggerated; but it undoubtedly was the richest emporium of commerce in early Russia.

The Venetians and the Genoese, so early as the fourteenth century, acted on the trade and industry of Russia. From India, Persia, and Arabia, they brought valuable commodities by way of the Caspian Sea, with which they supplied the southern parts of Europe. They had warehouses at Azof and Kaffa. From Astracan the goods were carried up the Volga, and then transported by land to the Don, whence they were forwarded to Azof. This trade was destroyed by the wars of Timour at the end of the fourteenth century, and transferred to Smyrna and Aleppo.

When the Polovtzi or Romanians—for the same people are known by both names—had seized a portion of the Crimea, the Genoese, in the eleventh century, paid them tribute for permission to build warehouses, which, in process of time, grew into towns and fortresses. Thus Theodosia, the modern Kaffa, rose in importance, and in the thirteenth century became a staple mart of commerce. It was anciently named Ardanda, or the *Tower of the Seven Gods*. Under the Genoese it was styled Crim-Stamboul, or the Constantinople of the Crimea. In 1475 Kaffa fell into the power of the Turks, and the Genoese were expelled.

About the year 1553, some ships were fitted out in London, at the instance of the famous Sebastian Cabot, for the purpose of discovering a north-east passage to China and India. Sir Hugh Willoughby had the chief command; but after he had reached 72° north latitude, he encountered a violent storm, and ran his vessel into a harbour of Russian Lapland, where he was frozen to death.

with all his crew. Richard Chancellor was more successful ; for after prosecuting his voyage in the White Sea, he dropped anchor near the Monastery of St. Nicholas, at the spot where the town and harbour of Archangel—so called from the archangel Michael—now stand. He communicated to the principal boyars that his object in visiting Russia was to trade with the people. This intelligence was transmitted to the Czar Ivan II., who invited the strangers to Moscow, defraying the expense of the journey. The Dutch merchants at Moscow represented the English as pirates ; but the czar imputed these calumnies to commercial jealousy, and announced that every facility should be given to encourage commerce between England and Russia.

This first voyage was a private speculation of a private partnership ; but when Chancellor returned home, and made known the results of his voyage, a company was formed in London under the title of “ Merchant Adventurers for the Discovery of Lands Unknown,” and it was incorporated by charter granted by Queen Mary. In 1555 Chancellor returned to Russia, bearing a letter signed by Philip and Mary, with which the czar was so well satisfied, that he gave the English company a “ Patent of License to trade in all parts of the Russian dominions, free of all taxes and imposts whatsoever.” Such was the origin of the Russian Company, which soon extended its trading operations. In 1557 it conceived the design of transporting the produce of the Levant through the Caspian across Russia ; and ten years afterwards, their authorised agent Mr. Jenkison presented letters from Queen Elizabeth to Ivan II., requesting license and safe-conduct to pass through Russia into Persia. The company flourished under the enlarged views and wise protection of the czar. At Moscow they formed a large establishment, had branch houses at Novgorod and Vologda, and were even allowed to possess real property at Kolmogor. The English exported from Russia furs, hides, masts, hemp, flax, cordage, tallow, train-oil, pitch, tar, and leather ; and imported broad-cloth, silk and cotton stuffs,

trinkets, sugar, paper, copper and lead. In 1582 nine ships were engaged in this trade. When Thomas Randolph, ambassador from Queen Elizabeth, went to Russia, the port of St. Nicholas consisted, besides the monastery, of only nine houses. The plan of building a new town was prepared in 1584, in which year Ivan II. died. When finished, it took the name of New Kolmogor. In the year 1637 it was entirely consumed by fire, and rebuilt with brick, when, from the adjacent monastery of the archangel Michael, it was named Archangelsk.

Mr. Tooke assigns two reasons for the indulgence shown to the English by Ivan. The first was his hatred of the Hanseatic League and of the merchants of Livonia; the second was an assurance of Queen Elizabeth that he should find an asylum in her dominions in case of revolution in his own. With that promise another negotiation was combined, relating to a proposal of marriage between the czar and Lady Anne Hastings, daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon. The truth of these facts is established by original records existing among the archives in the college of foreign affairs at Moscow.

Ivan II. made other efforts to develop the industry of Russia. He requested Charles V. Emperor of Germany to send him men of learning and skill to improve his country, and jurisconsults to improve his laws. In his application he said, "We want bricklayers, that we may cause to make glorious fine churches and God's houses; ingenious architects and work-people, who may build for us on the borders strong fast castles and impregnable bulwarks; and that we may be able to furnish them with necessary ammunition and artillery, we have ordered to be procured cannon-founders, powder-makers, gunners, and smiths."

The commerce of Russia was extended, after the discovery of Siberia, by the acquisition of numerous and valuable furs.

In the reign of Boris Godounof, the Germans made new efforts to revive their commerce with Russia. Lubeck sent ambassadors to Moscow; and had not death put an early termination

to his career, they would, in all probability, have succeeded in their project, which was to restore the counting-house at Novgorod, and to trade free of duties, as had been the ancient practice.

Peter the Great followed out these earlier precedents with vigour, and on an extended scale. He knew the aptitude of his own subjects for commerce ; and having that conviction, would not allow the Jews to settle in his empire, saying that the Muscovites needed no instruction from the Hebrews in the art of turning a penny. Peter designed a magnificent plan of auxiliary canals in conjunction with rivers, by which water-communication was established between the Baltic and the Caspian. The line of trade from the eastern regions of Siberia down to St. Petersburg proceeded from the Selenga to the Baikal, and from the Angara to the Jennessi, and thence into the Oby ; from the Oby to the Tobol ; thence over 400 versts of land, as far as the Tshussovaia, into the Kama, and from that river into the Volga ; hence from the sluices of Vishori-Volotshok into the Volkof, from the Volkof into the Ladoga Lake, and thence into the Neva. The Dwina carries on the internal navigation to Archangel, the Duna to Riga, the Dneister, Don, and Dneiper into the Euxine.

When he had subdued the northern provinces of Persia, Peter sought to induce the English to direct a portion of the Persian trade through Russia ; but the attempt failed, involving, it is said, in fourteen years the loss of 130,000 Russians, who perished in the enterprise. After he had got possession of Azof, and laid the foundation of Taganrog, he endeavoured to secure a share of the trade of the Black Sea ; but that scheme was arrested by the treaty of Pruth in 1711, when he had to restore Azof to the Sublime Porte. His plans were revived by Catharine II., who recovered Azof in 1774 by the treaty of Kainarji. By that treaty and the Convention of 1799, Russian vessels were allowed to navigate the Black Sea, and the passage of the Dardanelles was open to them. From that period the commerce of Russia

spread itself extensively and rapidly, both in the Sea of Azof and the Euxine. Peter had formed a dockyard at Voroneje, which stands on the high banks of the river from which it derives its name, and at a few versts from the spot where it falls into the Don. It is reckoned one of the most ancient towns, and is spoken of as existing in the twelfth century. Its importance, however, dates from the reign of Peter the Great. It now contains some cloth-manufactories, tanneries, soap and tallow factories, and carries on a great trade with the ports of the Black Sea.

In 1778 Catherine founded the town of Kherson on the right bank of the Dneiper, and seventy-two versts from its embouchure. It at once was highly favoured by numerous privileges, frequented by numerous foreigners, and soon established a trade with Constantinople and the Archipelago, quickly extended to Marseilles, Leghorn, and Trieste. But experience condemned Kherson as the primary port of the Black Sea, for its inconveniences greatly overbalanced its advantages. The cataracts of the Dneiper greatly impeded the water-communication with the interior, all merchandise being necessarily discharged when those points were reached, whence they were carried about seventy versts by land, and then re-embarked. Vessels which drew more than six feet water were obliged to remain thirty versts below the town. From the month of October the Dneiper is covered with ice, and often remains so till the month of March. The breaking up of the ice is very dangerous; so that commerce cannot be securely carried on for more than seven months in the year. The air of Kherson is considered insalubrious, and deters foreign merchants from residence.

These disadvantages led to the foundation of Odessa. "Catherine II.," says Demidoff, "conceived the project of erecting fortresses upon the new frontiers of her empire; where Hadji Bey, a little Turkish fort, was marked out as one of the points in this line of defensive works, between Ovidiopol, which was to guard the mouths of the Danube, and Tviospol, destined to command

the course of the Dneister. In 1794 the three fortresses were erected simultaneously, and the citadel of Odessa rose over the ruins of the old Mussulman fort of Hadji Bey. It was found in the history of the old colonies of Greece, that not far from these latitudes there had existed a city called Odyssora, or Odyssos; and the new colony was named Odessa. It fell into neglect under Paul; but on the intercession of Count Gagarin, President of the College of Trade, the works that had been discontinued were resumed, and the present lazaretto was founded." The treaty of Luneville had just restored peace to the continent, when Alexander ascended the throne. Soon afterwards all serious differences between England and Russia were terminated, and the treaty of Amiens was succeeded by a treaty between France and the Sublime Porte, by which French vessels were put on the same footing with those other nations most favoured by Turkey, and in consequence enjoyed the free navigation of the Black Sea. Soon afterwards the English, Prussians, Neapolitans, and Dutch obtained the same privilege. The Euxine was thus liberated from the exclusiveness of the Turks, and Odessa became the rallying-point of all these nations.

The plains of Bessarabia, Podolia, and all those countries lying eastward of the course of the Bug, possess a natural outlet at Odessa for the wool, grain, leather, and tallow which form the principal exports of those colonies. Alexander appreciated its position, and fostered its advantages. His first act was to admit Odessa to a community of laws with the rest of the empire. He then exempted it from taxation for twenty-five years, and freed it from the burden of finding quarters for the military. One-tenth of the customs were appropriated to the improvement of the port. The next measure lowered the customs' duties by one-fourth; and instead of one-tenth, one-fifth of the receipts was devoted to the amelioration of the harbour, and two annual markets were established. In 1817 it was declared a free port. The Duke of Richelieu, a refugee from France, was governor of the town

during this improving period, and his name is held in honour by the inhabitants. Odessa is an entrepôt. Producing nothing herself, she is the great distributor of the produce of Russia against that of Western Europe, and in this respect holds a commercial position similar to that of New York.

The money of ancient Russia was purely symbolic or representative. Neither foreign nor domestic coin was known in the country prior to the tenth century. The skins of the marten and the squirrel were stamped as currency. It is the opinion of some that the first coins were introduced by the Tatars into Russia; and that the Russian word for money, *denghi*, is derived from the Tatarian word *danga*, which signifies a token. When coins were impressed with the arms of Moscow—namely, a St. George with his spear—the word *kopeck* arose, from *kopæ*, or *kopeitzo*, a spear. There was, however, no mint in Russia at that time, nor was the right of coining a prerogative of majesty; but the gold and silversmiths struck the coins, any one of whom might convert his uncoined silver, with a moderate allowance for his work, into coined money of equal weight. Herberstein gives the following particulars of the early coins:

“They have four kinds of silver money,—that of Moscow, of Novgorod, of Tver, and Plescow. The money of Moscow is not round, but oblong, and of a sort of oval form, called a *deng*. It has different impressions, the old *deng* having on one side the figure of a rose, and the later one the figure of a man sitting on horseback; both of these have an inscription on the reverse. A hundred of them go to one Hungarian gold piece; six denges make an *altin*; twenty a *grifna*; 100 a *poltin*; and 200 a rouble. There are new coins now struck, with characters on both sides, forty of which are worth one rouble. The coin of Novgorod has on one side the figure of the prince sitting on his throne, and a man opposite to him making him his obeisance; on the other it has an inscription, and is worth twice as much as that of Moscow. Moreover, the *grifna* of Novgorod is worth fourteen roubles, and

the rouble of Novgorod 222 denges. The coin of Plescow has the head of an ox crowned, and an inscription on the other side. They have also a copper coin called *polani*; sixty of these are worth one deng of Moscow. They have no gold money, but mostly use Hungarian, and occasionally Rhenish money. They use the roubles of Riga on account of its proximity, one of which is worth two of those of Moscow. Nearly all the goldsmiths of Moscow coin money; and when any one brings masses of pure silver, and asks money for them, they weigh both the money and the silver, and balance it equally.”*

According to Tooke, so early as 1469 mention is made of a *deneschoni-master*, that is “money-maker.” His name was Ivan Fvasin. In 1475, the Grand Prince Ivan I. took into his service a certain Aristoteles of Bologna, who became his architect, statuary, founder, and master of the mint. In the letters-patent granted to the English Russian Company in 1569, they were empowered to stamp dollars and little pieces of money in Moscow and Novgorod. At length, towards the middle of the sixteenth century, Ivan IV. instituted the first regular coinage, and set up a mint at Moscow, and caused three roubles to be struck out of one *grivenka*. Whether the *grivna*, *grivenka*, *nagoti*, &c., were stamped coins or only weights of silver, and how much, appears uncertain; but under Ivan the coinage in general acquired a totally new form, denominations of specie being ordered to be coined after a defined alloy and weight: but still, according to Tooke and the authorities he has consulted, the rouble was only an imaginary coin; and he affirms that the first roubles were struck under the reign of Alexis in the year 1654, though they are spoken of in 1327. Those spoken of were probably the roubles of Riga, of which Herberstein speaks. Levesque states that coin was first struck in Russia under the reign of Vassili Donitrovitch, who ascended the throne

* Notes on Russia, by Baron Sigismund von Herberstein, vol. i. p. 109. London, printed for the Hackluyt Society.

in 1389 ; but this eminent writer appears in this instance to have confounded the coins struck by goldsmiths with those of the national mint : he also says that Moscow and Tver were the first to employ a Tatar money called *denga*. In 1420, Novgorod coined its local money. In confirmation of the previous statement, that Russia had no real roubles prior to 1654, Adam Olearius declares that the “Russians began by altines, grivnas, and roubles ; though, in fact, they have not those sorts of money in whole pieces, yet have them in a certain number of kopecks,—an altine in three, a grivna in ten, and a rouble in one hundred.”

The division of labour is even in our days very imperfectly carried out in Russia. Speaking generally, each peasant family supplies its own wants. Its members make their own clothes, furniture, and household utensils, and frequently build their own dwelling. In early times, the purchases of the peasants were limited to iron and salt ; and with the exception of those districts which are contiguous to the principal cities, the ancient practice is still observed. However, the peasants must earn money to pay the taxes they owe to the crown, and the *obrok* due to the lords, unless where the obrok is converted into so many days' labour. Hence it is that the Russian peasants are both mechanics and agriculturists. In England there is a complete industrial separation between town and country, and the urban population exceeds that of the rural districts. The very reverse is witnessed in Russia. According to the census of 1838, the aggregate towns of Russia only contained one-eleventh of the whole population. In 638 towns it was ascertained there were 4,745,622 inhabitants, while the entire population of Russia at the same date was estimated at 54,000,000 ; but this figure did not include the mountaineers of the Caucasus, the soldiers and their families, or the peoples of Poland and Finland. M. de Koeppen enumerates the army and navy, the cantonists, and all dependent on the administration of the united services, at one million and a half. In the archives of Herman for the year 1845, the entire population of all the towns

and boroughs of any importance is put down at 4,906,310 ; and of these, 246,000 belong to the nobles and the czar, and 78,480 to the Church.

Schnitzler gives the following view of the population to the square mile, or rather to the verst, which is two-thirds of a mile. "Moscow is in the centre of the empire, in the midst of the principal element of the population, the basis of its nationality. The Moskwa, a river which flows at the foot of the Kremlin, is made by the Oka to communicate with the Volga. Now this majestic river, which passes through a great portion of European Russia, in its course of nearly a thousand leagues, forms, as is well known, the junction between the seas of the north and the seas of the south, between the Baltic and the Caspian. All the roads of the interior of the country either end or touch at Moscow. People pass through this town in going from the capital of the north to the Crimea or to the Caucasus ; it is the same in travelling to Kasan and Siberia, or when they repair to the populous fair of Nijni-Novgorod, where the east and the west seem to give each other a rendezvous every year in the month of July. The real power of Russia is there in the centre. The government of Moscow is the best peopled of all. There each square verst is computed to contain forty-eight inhabitants, whereas in that of St. Petersburg the density of the population is only from sixteen to seventeen souls in the same space ; in that of Novgorod it is less than nine ; in that of Archangel there is but one inhabitant in three versts ; and at the other end of the empire, in the government of Astracan, each verst contains but two at the utmost. The greater part of the governments grouped about that of Moscow are likewise among those which are the best peopled : that of Toula reckons forty-six souls to the square verst ; that of Riazan nearly thirty-seven ; that of Kalouga thirty-six ; that of Vladimir about thirty ; that of Smolensko is reckoned at about twenty-four ; and that of Tver at from twenty-two to twenty-three. A little farther, Kousk has from forty-two to forty-three ; Orel thirty-six, and Jaroslaf

nearly thirty-two. By adding together the fourteen governments of the centre, comprised for the most part within ancient Russia Major, we find a group of 17,000,000 souls concentrated on a space of about 600,000 square versts, or a space equal in extent to France, Belgium, and the Netherlands taken together ; whereas all European Russia, or a superficies of nearly 5,000,000 square versts,—that is to say, eight times greater,—has scarcely more than three times the population. This is not all. This agglomeration of men, more compact than elsewhere, is also by far the most industrious, and consequently the richest and the least ignorant. Of about 7000 establishments of factories and manufactories that Russia possessed in 1842, more than 1000, or one-seventh, belonged to the government of Moscow, where nearly 100,000 workmen were employed, out of about 420,000 men devoted to the industrial arts throughout the empire.”

Throughout Russia, labour is subjected to a special organisation; and all new enterprises are protected against competition, which might strangle them in their cradle. It is highly probable that, in the early periods of history, the communal organisation of the towns closely resembled the communal organisation of the villages ; for the municipal and corporative systems, borrowed in many particulars from the trading institutions of Germany, are clearly traceable to Catherine II. and Paul I. Indeed, the associative principle is a very marked characteristic of Russian nationality, and appears palpably in the combinations of workmen of every grade. The word *artel* may be rendered into English by *club*, to which every member makes a monied contribution, from which is formed a common purse designed to carry out some special enterprise, under the superintendence of a committee of management. By the existing laws of Russia, every one who wishes to carry on a trade in a town must belong to a trading association or *guild*, presided over by an *ancient* or elder man, whom we may style *alderman* ; and that officer is entitled to a seat in the municipal council. The wardens of the several guilds in a town

elect in common a supreme director of the several corporations, who also has a seat in the municipal council. By these bodies the periods of apprenticeship are fixed, and the duties of apprentices and journeymen defined. The law requires that every trader should be inscribed or enrolled in a guild ; but practically this is a vain formula, since no corporation can prevent a working man from gaining his bread by the sweat of his brow : but none can hire journeymen or have apprentices but those who are admitted to the rank of masters in some corporation ; and to gain that position they must be examined by the Board.*

Merchants are classed in three guilds, each having different privileges. The principal object aimed at by this classification or enrolment into the guilds, is to make sure that the merchant possesses a certain amount of capital. Those inscribed on the lists of the two higher guilds are authorised to trade wholesale and retail, and establish manufactories ; but the members of the third guild are subject to many restrictions. Foreigners enjoy certain privileges, but are also placed under some restraints. They may establish themselves in towns, and, on payment of a fee, may be admitted into the corporations ; and if they give evidence of possessing sufficient capital, they enjoy all the advantages conferred on the two higher classes of guilds ; but they can only purchase wholesale, and that exclusively of Russian merchants and producers. They are prohibited from all retail transactions with the burgesses and peasants, and even with other foreigners resident in Russia ; but they may buy in open fairs, which are exempted from the general rule of restriction. No foreigner can trade with another foreigner. The object of these regulations is to secure to the natives a monopoly of the home trade ; for foreigners engross nearly the whole of the external trade, with the exception of that to Asia. The foreign trade of St. Petersburg is almost entirely in the hands of English and German merchants. It is stated that during the reign of Catherine II. there were thirty to forty Russian commer-

* Haxthausen.

cial firms at St. Petersburg; Haxthausen reduces their present number to three or four. The truth is, that though the Russians have great aptitude in minor traffic, they have little talent for large transactions or for maritime commerce.

The hereditary nobility are not subject to the law of guilds, for on their own lands they may establish whatever factories they please. In this respect they are widely different from the nobility of Western Europe, who have always considered trade degrading to their dignity. However, out of 7000 factories in the whole empire, it is calculated that only 500 belong to the nobility.

Haxthausen states, that if 500 foreign families are established in a Russian town, the municipal council is permitted to admit a certain number of them to membership, as well as to take their seats in the committee of the trading corporation, and in the tribunal of commerce. The humblest classes of the urban population are entitled to embark in every trade, and sell publicly their own proper produce; but not so if the goods pass through various processes requiring the labour of different mechanics or artisans. The small traders cannot employ more than four men; two apprentices of eighteen years each reckon as one journeyman. By paying a license tax they are classed among trading burgesses, yet even then they must not keep shops. In addition to the members of their own families, they may, having paid the license tax, employ eight journeymen in their factories, in addition to the members of their own families; and in such a case, two lads, each of fifteen years of age, count as one journeyman. Peasants, and those inhabitants who have not the burgess rights, must inscribe themselves for the time that their passport allows them to reside in a town. As a general rule, burgesses and merchants cannot have a fixed habitation in the country; but by special authorisations this rule may be relaxed. The peasants may trade as they please in villages. In relation to the public fairs, no town merchants can put up booths in them, or stalls, either within or beyond the ring or circuit in which the fair is held; but the mechanics of villages,

as shoemakers, and the peasants, who are porters by trade, enjoy perfect freedom. "The Russian peasant," says Storch, "may traverse the whole empire to sell his goods or his labour."

In the various workshops and factories of Russia, the labour is chiefly done by serfs, both by those of the crown and those of landed proprietors. During winter, many of them work in their own cottages on account of merchants who furnish the raw material. If their lords are owners of factories, they work in them, or in factories so near at hand that they can live at home. Others hire themselves out in the large towns, returning sooner or later to their communes. For the share of land that a Russian peasant holds he is bound to pay a tax (obrok) into the imperial treasury, if he belongs to the crown; or to his lord, if he is the serf of a lord: but he can commute the obrok by working three days on the land of the crown or of his lord; or the serf may work in the factory of his lord, if he has one, instead of on his estates. Formerly the lord could hire out his serf to a factory; but this practice is discontinued, with the exception of minors, who may be hired out as apprentices for seven years. The modern practice is for the peasant-serf to make his own terms at the factory, after having received permission to absent himself: if he belong to the crown, he must obtain that permission from his commune; if to a lord, the permission must come from the lord; and the lord is rarely reluctant, as he raises the obrok before he gives the passport. According to a law of Peter the Great, when peasants were inscribed in a factory, and their rations and pay fixed, they were bound to remain there for life, and could never return to their communes; but, with few exceptions, that system has been abolished: for instance, it is continued in the imperial armoury at Toulâ, where the workmen receive regular wages, and cannot quit the establishment without the permission of the authorities.

It has been shown how thinly Russia is populated, comparing the population relatively to the whole area on which it resides; and even where it is densest, it is very far below the average of

Western Europe. The practice of transferring the peasants into the towns is injurious to agriculture, though it may prematurely force manufactures into existence. This system was strongly condemned by Catherine II. During her reign the crown-peasants' obrok averaged three silver roubles; on the estates of the lords it averaged five roubles. It was rarely less than this on the worst lands; on the best it was considerably more. The peasant on the soil found it difficult to pay this tax; but when he went into a town he paid it easily. Hence the cupidity of the lords encouraged this immigration; for the more the peasant earned, the higher became the obrok: not indeed directly, but indirectly; for the excess was charged on the passport, without which the peasant could not leave. When the peasant returned to his commune, possessed of hundreds of roubles, the fruits of his economy, his riches prompted others to try their luck in the towns. He himself was old or feeble; and thus, in a short time, all the vigorous men left the plough, and agriculture languished. It was under these circumstances that Catherine II. put forward the following *instructions*, addressed to a commission engaged in reforming the laws:—

“Russia, far from having a sufficiency of population, possesses an immense extent of territory which is uncultivated and uninhabited. How flourishing would this empire become, if, by wise regulations, we could prevent this loss! It appears, moreover, that the new system adopted by Russian gentlemen of levying their revenues diminishes the rural population, and is fatal to agriculture. Almost all lands now pay their dues (obrok) in silver. The proprietors, who never or rarely live on their estates, tax each peasant from two to five roubles a head, without troubling themselves as to the means of the peasant to obtain the coin. It will be very necessary to enact by law that the masters should use more discrimination in placing burdens on their peasants, especially so as to remove the smallest number from their dwellings and families. By such judicious arrangements agriculture and population would gain; whereas at present large

numbers of husbandmen are absent from their homes during fifteen years, and tramp over the empire, from town to town, in the endeavour to earn by their labour the charges imposed on them."

Wages, considered in their purchasing power over commodities, are high in Russia, which is proved by the condition of the people. "The daily revenue of the humblest labourer," says Storch, "is superior to his wants, without cutting him down to the bare subsistence of a prisoner. His clothing is always complete; and none but beggars, who are extremely rare, want the necessaries of life. Every Russian has his sheep-skin garments; and we never see in Russia, as we do in other countries, even the poorest without warm apparel during the cold weather. The most needy have also a lodging well-warmed." Kohl bears similar testimony:—"In no town in Russia," says that intelligent traveller, "do we behold that shocking contrast between misery and luxury which exists in all the cities of Western Europe, although the distance between the rich and poor is great. That spirit of avarice which covets our neighbour's goods is not yet kindled among the Russian people. Every one has sufficient food, though it may consist of cabbage and coarse bread; and sufficient clothing, though it may consist of sheep-skins. The districts of St. Petersburg, inhabited by the working-classes and the *black* population, are not repugnant to the eye, though they are not attractive."

M. Kosegarten, in an elaborate and minute review of Russian industry, adduces some statistics on wages and the rate of living, collected from various manufacturers, which throw considerable light on the condition of the mechanic and artisan. A weaver in the country receives three kopecks in copper money for weaving an *arschine* of cloth, or about 26 English inches;* and he only produces from 10 to 12 *arschines* in a day. His daily wages, therefore, range between 30 to 36 kopecks, or from 4*d.*

* 100 *arschines* are equal to 77·77 English yards.

to 4½*d.* English money. Among this class of people the standard of dietary is very low, consisting chiefly of cabbage-soup, which they obtain from their own grounds. They seldom buy any thing, and their daily outlay is computed at five kopecks: they therefore can pay their obrok with ease. But when we pass from the rural districts to the towns, both wages and the cost of living increase considerably. All provisions are dear at St. Petersburg, because the rigour of the climate and the poverty of the soil compel the inhabitants to draw their food from remote distances. On this account wages are one-third higher at St. Petersburg than at Moscow; so that a workman who receives from 25 to 30 roubles monthly at Moscow, obtains 35 to 40 at St. Petersburg. At Kursk, which is in the purely agricultural zone, wages paid to men average only 10 to 15 roubles a month, and to women only 6 to 8 roubles; but then their living does not cost more than 2 roubles a month. The working-classes, therefore, in Russia are much better off than is generally supposed to be the case; and Kosegarten affirms that many of the factory-workers at Moscow take home annually 300 roubles and upwards. It must also be remarked, that there are only 240 to 260 working-days, because the numerous festivals of the Greek Church are rigorously observed; and also because the mechanics and artisans pass a certain time every year in their own cottages, at Easter and at the hay-harvest. The foremen, chiefly foreigners, and principally English and German, have salaries from 10,000 to 12,000 roubles annually.*

* Wherever we have mentioned the kopeck or rouble, paper money is to be understood, unless we add the word silver. The metallic or silver rouble is worth 37½*d.* in English money. By a ukase of the 13th of July, 1839, the former money in banco or paper roubles was ordered to be discontinued, and the accounts kept in them to be exchanged, in their amounts, into silver roubles, at the rate of 350 paper roubles for 100 silver roubles. The rate of exchange of Odessa on London is still generally made in paper roubles, the par of exchange in which is 2240 paper roubles for 100*l.* sterling.—*Tate's Modern Cambist*. Sixth edition.

The agricultural productions of Russia are varied and lucrative, though science has done little for the plough. According to Meyendorff, the culture of wheat ceases at 58 degrees of latitude, of oats at 63, of rye at 65, and of barley at 67. The birch-tree does not grow beyond 69 degrees, the pine and larch live to 68, the fir does not flourish beyond 67, or the alder beyond 63.

The Russian privy councillor Tengoborski, in a work entitled *Studies on the Productive Power of Russia*, brought down to 1852, estimates the annual yield of the grain harvests of Great Russia, or Russia Proper, at 250 millions of tschetverts; and adding to this figure the produce of Poland and Finland, he makes the total 260 millions of tschetverts.* He puts the export of corn annually, on an estimate from 1838 to 1848, at 4,110,000 tschetverts, and considers that the average yield is four and a half times the amount of the seed. The prices in various parts of the empire are extremely variable: thus this writer states, that in 1847 a tschetvert of rye was worth 11 roubles 7 kopecks in Courland, while it sold in the government of Orenburg for 1 rouble 16 kopecks. In 1849, the price at St. Petersburg was 6 roubles 49 kopecks, while at Kursk and Penza it was only 1 rouble 80 kopecks.†

For statistical purposes, Russia has been divided into five principal zones. The agriculture zone includes the governments of Podolia, Kief, Pultawa, Orel, Kursk, Kharkoff, Voroneje, Simbirsk, Penza, Tamboff, certain parts of the government of Toula, of Riasan, of Nijni-Novgorod, Kasan, Saratoff, Catherinoslav, a small portion of the country of the Cossacks of the Don, and the larger part of Bessarabia. This region is also called “the region of the black soil,” because it consists of a deep layer of mould of that colour covering the whole surface, which is the cause of its extraordinary fertility. Its superficies is estimated at 17,400 square miles, with a population of about 20

* 100 tschetverts equal to 72·12 English imperial quarters.

† 100 kopecks equal to one rouble.

millions. The Baltic provinces, which include Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland, are very fertile in corn, as well as the Siberian province of the Jennisseisk. It must be borne in mind, however, that in some parts of Russia the production of corn does not suffice for the wants of the inhabitants. Thus the governments of Tobolsk and Tomsk furnish corn to the governments of Perm, Oreñburg, and Irkousk. Bad seasons are also to be taken into account; on an average, the crop fails once in seven years. In three consecutive years (1839 to 1841) it was defective. The special records of the government of Simbirsk give three bad years in five, or four in seven. Prices of corn and flour, owing to the precariousness of the seasons and the difficulty of transport, from the want of roads, fluctuate very considerably in Russia, more so than in any other country. It was ascertained in 1837, that prices were four or five times higher at St. Petersburg than at Kief or Tchernigoff, and nearly ten times lower in the government of Tomsk than in Livonia.

The culture of potatoes, comparatively neglected formerly, has made a wonderful advance in recent years; and a report from the minister of the imperial domains puts the quantity raised in 1847 at 19,394,000 tschetverts. Tengoborski raises the whole produce of the empire, including Poland and Finland, to 30 millions of tschetverts. Beetroot he puts down at 30 millions of pouds, yielding a million pouds of sugar.*

Vegetables are specially cultivated in the environs of Moscow and in the government of Jaroslaf; but they flourish on a more limited scale in many other parts. With the exception of some governments in the south, fruit-trees are neglected. Wine is made on the lower Don, on the coasts of the Black and Caspian Seas, and also in the Transcaucasian provinces, especially in Kaketia. Imeretia is perhaps the native country of the vine; and there, according to Golovine, "the stocks are of the size of

* The poud is equal to 36 lbs. English weight.

the arm." The oxen of Russia, except in the Baltic provinces and Podolia, are very inferior. About 30,000 pouds of butter are exported annually through the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof.

A considerable portion of Russia in Europe produces flax, and the same districts yield hemp. Tengoborski puts down the export of both these articles, on an average from 1842 to 1849, at 6,991,581 pouds annually. The Russian flax is inferior to that of Flanders, which is attributed to unskilful culture and preparation. Hops are grown in the western parts of European Russia, but beer is not a popular beverage; kwas, or brandy made from rye, being the usual drink of the common people, though tea is now coming into favour. Tobacco is grown in the governments of Tchernigoff, Kursk, Simbirsk, and Saratoff; and finds a market at Riga, St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Odessa; but the largest factory in the empire, that of Joukoff at St. Petersburg, only uses American tobacco. The forests of Russia, especially those of Siberia, are rich in timber, which is well adapted for building purposes; but the excessive cost of conveying it to a suitable market must be lowered considerably by good roads, before it can become a valuable item in the aggregate of national wealth. Tengoborski estimates the area of the crown forests, not including those belonging to the admiralty, at 115,638,000 dessiatines.* According to M. de Reden, the value of timber exported in 1840 amounted to 2,656,500 silver roubles. On an average from 1846 to 1848, both included, giving a period of three years, the export of tallow is calculated by Tengoborski at 3,810,000 pouds annually. Skins and hides exported figure for 1,408,756 silver roubles; but they are not equal to those of Buenos Ayres, though at present there is an establishment at Odessa for their superior preparation, which may raise their

* According to Tooke, a dessiatine contains 117,600 square feet. According to Haxthausen, $4\frac{1}{2}$ Prussian acres. According to Golovine, rather more than a French hectare, which is equal to about $2\frac{1}{4}$ English acres.

value. Furs, in 1843, were exported to the value of 1,808,000 silver roubles; and in the same year, at the great fair of Nijni-Novgorod, the value of the furs taken from all animals—martens, squirrels, foxes, wolves, lynxes, &c., amounted to 2,000,000 silver roubles. Wool is abundantly produced in the Steppes, in a large portion of the agricultural zone, and in Livonia and Esthonia. The merino sheep were introduced forty years ago; in 1844 Russia exported 842 pouds of wool, while it consumes 480,000 of native growth. There are computed to be 40 millions of sheep in the empire, and some of the flock-masters in the Steppes are said to own 60,000 to 80,000 head of those animals. Hogs' bristles are exported to the extent of 63,200 pouds, and of the value of 1,302,235 silver roubles. Honey is one of the most ancient articles of Russian commerce, and still flourishes, as does wax, much used in churches.

Russia is rich in metals,—in platinum, in iron, copper, lead, zinc, and pewter; and the official lists state that, at the fair of Nijni-Novgorod in 1842, the value of native metals amounted to 7,700,000 silver roubles. The governments of Tomsk, Perm, Vologda, Viatka, and Orenburg are the richest in iron and copper. Poland also produces iron, but Finland has none. Lead is found in the government of Perm and in the mines of Nertschink, which also yield mercury. Zinc is obtained in Finland, and abundantly in Poland. The official tables consulted by Kosegarten, from whom most of these details are taken, show that, in 1844, Russia imported 4,600,000 pouds of salt, although there are abundant saline lakes in the Crimea, in the Nogais Steppes, in Bessarabia, and in the government of Irkousk. The government of Perm has saline springs; saltpetre is found in Bessarabia; asphalte and sulphur in the government of Orenburg; and naphtha in the neighbourhood of Bakou. Central Russia is without stone; but the governments of Perm and Olonetz possess granite and marble, and granite is abundant in Finland. Perm yields jasper and loadstone, and, as well as Irkousk, is rich in precious stones, amethysts, agates, and

diamonds. In southern Russia, and even in some provinces of central Russia, where wood is wanting, peat is of great value, and that article is furnished by the governments of Toula, Kalouga, and Kharkoff. Recent researches have proved that beds of peat extend from Taganrog to the environs of Kharkoff, and up to the Dneiper. It has also been found in Siberia. Finally, the total annual value of the raw produce of the Russian soil is computed by Tengoborski at 2,093,500,000 silver roubles; and this is presumed to be below the reality.

Gold has become a valuable product in Russia. Alexander von Humboldt states, that “ though the Ural, in the years 1821 and 1822, only furnish 27 to 28 pouds of gold, yet the produce of the gold-sand gradually rose, in the three following years (1823, 1824, 1825), to 105,206,237 pouds. According to the manuscript communication made to me by the Russian minister of finance (Count Cancrin), ‘ Return of the Precious Metal obtained in the Russian Empire, and refined in the Mint of St. Petersburg,’ the amount of pure gold was, in

1828	.	.	.	209 pouds and 29 lbs.
1829	.	.	.	289 „ 25
1830	.	.	.	347 „ 27
1831	.	.	.	352 „ 2
1832	.	.	.	380 „ 31
1833	.	.	.	368 „ 27
1834	.	.	.	363 „ 10

“ At the period of the expedition which I undertook into Northern Asia, at the request of the Emperor Nicholas, the gold-washing was confined by the mountains on the European extremities of the Ural. The Altai (in Mongolisch, the golden mountain,) furnished merely the inconsiderable quantity (about 1900 marks) of gold which could be obtained from the silver ore of the rich mines of Smeinogorsk, Ridderski, and Syrianowske. Since 1834, however, the industry of the gold-washers in this central part of Siberia has been unexpectedly rewarded. A bed of gold-sand has been discovered, precisely similar to those on the decli-

vity of the Ural. The house of Popof, so deservedly celebrated for the encouragement it has afforded for improving the intercourse in the interior of Asia, has here also set a laudable example. Among the 398 pouds of gold produced by the entire Russian empire in 1836, 293 pouds 26 lbs. were from the Ural, and 104 pouds 15 lbs. from the Altai. In the following year, the produce of Eastern Siberia had so much increased, that the Altai furnished 130 pouds, and the Ural (from crown and private washings) 309 pouds of wash-gold. If to these amounts we add 30 pouds of gold contained in the ore found in the solid rocks of the Altai, it will give, for the entire produce of Russian gold for the year 1837, precisely 469 pouds. The gold-washing in the Ural is, therefore, in a very gradual decline. The Altai, however, contributes so much to the general mass, that its produce, as compared with that of the Ural, is already as 4 to $9\frac{1}{2}$.*

Tengoborski estimates the yield of all the Russian gold-mines, in 1848, at 1731 pouds. He calculates the total quantity of that metal raised from the year 1819 to the year 1848, at 223,900,000 silver roubles; the average raised from 1840 to 1848 is put down at 1196 pouds, representing a value of 944,988 roubles.

Credit is long in Russia, and the interest on money is high. At the annual fair of Nijni-Novgorod, the largest in the world, cash is rarely paid for goods, but the settlement is postponed till the following year. The interest of money ranges from 8 to 10 per cent, and even exceeds that amount; at the great fairs even 24 per cent is charged. However, the government commercial bank, with a capital of 30,000,000 of roubles, discounts at 6 per cent. That bank gives to the members of the guilds a credit equal to the sum required for admittance into those corporations, but it demands two acceptors to the bill, besides the signature of the drawer. It also lends on the deposits of goods; but

* On the Fluctuations in the Supplies of Gold, with Relation to Problems in Political Economy. By Alexander von Humboldt. London: Simpkin and Co. 1839.

this accommodation is limited to Russian subjects and Russian merchandise. The commercial bank has its principal office at St. Petersburg, with branches at Moscow, Archangel, Kief, Odessa, Riga, and at Nijni-Novgorod during the fair. The imperial bank only lends on real estate; and the pawnbrokers can only receive precious stones, jewels, and other objects of great intrinsic value. Occasionally the government advances money without interest to those who introduce new fabrics, especially agricultural implements.

The foreign trade of Russia is very limited. What it sends to Asia consists of inferior articles and of little value, such as sail-cloth, cables, leather, and tallow-candles. It exports cloth to China, and to central Asia some articles of iron; but it is certain that it cannot stand up against the manufacturing competition of western Europe. The *Annuaire des deux Mondes* states the revenue derived from the Russian custom-house to be as follows for 1848 and 1849:

Customs Revenue.					
			Silver roubles.	English sterling.	
1848	.	.	31,220,149	.	£4,683,022
1849	.	.	31,760,318	.	4,764,047

In the latter year, the account rendered by the finance minister shows that the internal revenue amounted to 40,289,354 roubles silver, making the total derived from the two sources under 11,000,000*l.* sterling. The foreign commerce of Russia, for the three years ending 1850, shows an increase upon each year; but the comparison on the last two years exhibits but a nominal increase, as appears by the following statement, which includes the value of imports and exports, exclusive of the precious metals:

Value of Exports.					
			Silver roubles.	English money.	
1848	.	.	179,115,125	.	£26,867,269
1849	.	.	192,335,242	.	28,850,286
1850	.	.	192,366,190	.	28,854,928

The course of trade is shown in the following table :

		Value of Exports.	
		Silver roubles.	English money.
By the frontier of Europe	.	83,133,948	£12,470,092
„ „ Asia	.	17,222,954	1,122,295
For the kingdom of Poland	.	2,311,350	346,702
„ „ Finland	.	1,779,920	266,988
Total	.	98,448,172	£14,206,077

Comparing the value of the exports in 1850 with those of 1848, the increase is 1,516,698*l*.

The value of the importations for the same year were divided as follows :

		Value of Imports.	
		Silver roubles.	English money.
From Europe	.	76,107,446	£11,416,067
„ Asia	.	15,744,430	2,361,664
„ Poland	.	1,275,580	191,337
„ Finland	.	790,568	118,585
Total	.	93,918,024	£14,087,653

The total amount of specie exported from Russia in 1850 amounted to 5,249,364 roubles, or 786,826*l*.; and the imports to 7,775,988 roubles, or 1,116,398*l*.

The value of the exports and imports of Russia added together, in 1850, was only about 28,000,000*l*. sterling ; or, including the exports and imports of specie, 30,803,662*l*., of which no less than 25,000,000*l*. and upwards are with Europe, or about 83 per cent.*

The public debt of Russia has increased of late years. It stands thus :

		Public Debt of Russia.	
January 1.		Silver roubles.	English money.
1849	.	326,675,853	£49,001,378
1850	.	336,219,492	50,432,929
1851	.	386,309,693	57,946,454
1852	.	400,667,799	60,100,170

* The Circular to Bankers, 13th August, 1853.

Since the year 1820, Russia has contracted loans with the capitalists of Europe to the extent of 14,500,000*l.* sterling.*

The home trade of Russia may be considered as intermittent, as the bulk of it is transacted at the fairs, which are held at periodical epochs. The trade of the towns is limited, and is declining or stationary at Moscow, as the great fortunes are diminishing from year to year—partly through the unmeasured prodigality of the nobles, partly through the prevalent custom of dividing patrimonies at the death of the father. The great mass of the people (the serfs) want but little, and the smallness of their means limits the power of purchasing within narrow boundaries. By a system of canalisation, which connects the rivers, the water-carriage is complete over immense distances; but the home trade requires earth or iron roads, and till these are constructed interchange will be very confined.

* The Circular to Bankers, 13th August, 1853.

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